

A
MARVEL
MONTHLY

SCIENCE FANTASY IN TV, CINEMA AND GRAPHICS

Nº22 60p

STARBURST

AT LAST! THE STAR WARS SEQUEL
THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

IN-DEPTH PROFILE ON
JOHN CARPENTER
DIRECTOR OF THE FOG

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH
CANADA'S KING OF FANTASY
DAVID CRONENBERG

PLUS:

BORIS KARLOFF'S THE INVISIBLE MAN
MAT IRVINE ON SPECIAL EFFECTS

THE RETURN OF
CHEWBACCA!





THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

THE MOST AWAITED SEQUEL OF ALL!
WHAT IS THE FATE OF DARTH VADER?
WHO WILL PRINCESS LEIA CHOOSE – LUKE
OR HAN SOLO? ALL IS NOT WHAT IT SEEMS...

THE FOG

THE LATEST FANTASY OFFERING FROM
JOHN (DARK STAR) CARPENTER. DON'T
MISS OUR FEATURE THE CARPENTER
FILE STARTING ON PAGE 14.



STARBURST LETTERS 4

OUR READERS WRITE ON FANTASY FEMALES, STAR TREK AND GRAPHICS.

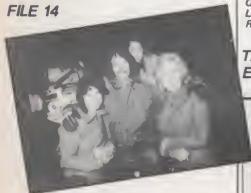
THINGS TO COME 6

OUR EVER-POPULAR NEWS COLUMN MARCHES ON, BRINGING YOU ALL THE NEWS IN TV AND CINEMA SF.

STARBURST FILM REVIEWS 12

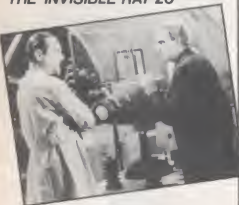
WE TAKE A CRITICAL LOOK AT TWO NEW FANTASY FILMS, WHEN TIME RAN OUT AND TOOLBOX MURDERS.

THE CARPENTER FILE 14



DIRECTOR JOHN CARPENTER IS WELL-KNOWN TO STARBURST READERS FOR HIS EXCELLENT LOW-BUDGET SF FILM, DARK STAR. WE PRESENT AN IN-DEPTH PROFILE OF HIS CAREER.

THE INVISIBLE RAY 20



THIS MONTH, IN OUR ONGOING SF CLASSICS SERIES WE TAKE YOU BACK TO 1936, THE YEAR KARLOFF AND LUGOSI STARRED TOGETHER IN THE INVISIBLE RAY.

BEST OF 1979 CHART 24



AFTER OUR CHART OF ALL TIME BOX OFFICE HITS IN THE FANTASY FIELD LAST ISSUE, TONY CRAWLEY REVEALS THE CHAMPS OF 1979.

THE MAKING OF THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK 26



STARBURST REPORTS ON THE MAKING OF THE MOST AWAITED SEQUEL OF ALL TIME... THE CONTINUATION OF THE STAR WARS SAGA.

BARON MUNCHHAUSEN 36

BARON MUNCHHAUSEN IS A STRANGE, BUT INTRIGUING, FANTASY FILM WHICH COMBINES LIVE ACTION WITH ANIMATION. JOHN FLEMING REVIEWS THE MOVIE.

THE CRONENBERG TAPES 40



DAVID CRONENBERG IS A MAKER OF HORROR FILMS WHO CONCENTRATES HEAVILY ON THE TERRORS OF SCIENCE. PHIL EDWARDS SPOKE TO HIM IN LONDON EARLIER THIS YEAR.

BOOK WORLD 46



THIS MONTH STARBURST PRESENTS TWO REVIEWS OF GIGER'S ALIEN AN ACCOUNT OF THE DESIGNING OF A MOVIE.

IRVINE ON DESIGN 51

IN THE SECOND PART OF HIS ONGOING SERIES ON SPECIAL EFFECTS MATT IRVINE DISCUSSES THE ART OF DESIGN.

STARBURST LETTERS

UNDUE PRAISE

Whet with your pee-faced American counterparts planning a super-special Star Trek issue, other magazines wielding over-long and monotonous Trek articles about the series and the film, us bleary-eyed readers are becoming somewhat tired, not to say downright bored! As far as I'm concerned, the series has had its day and is already overblown and over-rated to the point of ludicrousness. That not being enough, the movie has been released amid a barrage of non-stop publicity, heiling it to be the motion picture of all time. Not surprisingly, it isn't. What it has is brilliant special effects (which, after all, take up three quarters of the film) but it is an awfully acted and scripted movie too. What I am saying is that a Star Trek The Motion Picture review would be accepted but more hoo-ha about this banal film would not — at least not without shrieks of despair anyhow!

It is a shame that while Star Trek basks smugly in undue praise, other shows, infinitely better, suffer. Two cases in point: *Space: 1999* and *Blake's 7*. *Space: 1999* must surely be the most underrated British television show ever. Its failure in this country can be attributed to the money-grabbing ITV network who would rather place infantile, mindless

American pap on at peak viewing time than a decent, honest and splendid British tv show. *Had Space: 1999* been given a peek time it deserved, its success would have been inevitable. While *Blake's 7* may not be of high production values, it certainly tries hard and practically succeeds. Its script is so ingenious that it leaves all the American shows behind. Now in its third series I find *Blake's 7* tremendous (at least the best thing on tv at the moment and that is saying something).

So now, *Starburst*, could we have more, much more, about *Space: 1999*?

David Gibson,
Felthorpe,
Norwich.



MORE GRAPHICS!

So Dez Skinn leaves for pastures new, eh? Well, I wish him every success in his future ventures and let's hope that he creates something as interesting as *Starburst* (such as a re-vamped *Halls of Horror* for instance).

I take it that *Starburst 20* was *Alan's* first official issue, without Dez? I must say that I loved the new cover layouts, although the contents page could have done with an editorial! ... ah, there it is on page 52! Nice idea to move the letters page to the front of the book along with *Things to Come*.

I enjoyed the Fantasy Females section (and I'm not the only one

I'm sure!). Any chance of this becoming a main feature, say a colour centrespread in each issue? (Only kidding, but it would be nice to see another "pin-up" feature sometime.)

At last! An article on a Gerry Anderson show! Unfortunately, you started with one of the lesser shows instead of *Supercar* or *Fireball XL5* which would probably be more appealing to the readers. Will you be covering these programmes in the months to come? There are many Anderson fans out here who would love to see such features. I'm sure.

Incidentally, with *Sci-Fi* being so popular in cinema and tv at the moment, isn't it about time that

BUY BRITISH

A great informative and much-needed magazine of the sci-fi front. The American magazines we get on this side of "the puddle" are just that — American! Hence twenty pages of ads, thirty pages of rubbish and one page of definite interest.

Good articles on *Blake's 7*, *Doctor Who* and *Gerry Anderson* I much prefer. You have a knack of getting through to the facts and not losing them in over-descriptive pecking.

I find the reviews, previews and *Things to Come* most informative though in *Starburst 20* Mr Crawley did disturb me somewhat! Why all the praise for *Dark Star*? It was a good storyline and the acting was good, giving a very depressive atmosphere, but the special effects (save the storm and the hyper-space jump) were decidedly poor. In particular, the alien was appalling!

With regard to *Star Trek* The Motion Picture, L. Prescott of Liverpool seems a very biased trekkie — I know many people who walked out rather than fell asleep. I had read the book so I just managed to follow the film for the effects.

Besides, Mr Crawley, what's with calling *Alan Dean Foster* "a



heck"? Didn't he write the story for *Dark Star*? Not to mention the fact that you should read the *Book World* review of *Tar Aiyem Krang* (*Starburst 12*). I have read all four books in the series and it is an excellent read.

Robert Lewis,
Reading,
Berks.

Actually, Robert, *Alan Dean Foster* is responsible only for the novelisation of the *Dark Star* script which in turn was based on the work of John Carpenter and *Dan O'Bannon*.

ITV began repeating the Anderson series again? I'm positive that *XL5* would be a treat for the kids as well as a nostalgic joy for older viewers. At the moment, I'm eagerly awaiting the day when someone decides to revitalize *Captain Scarlet* as a live-action tv series. Such a series, with its emphasis on *Scarlet's* indestructibility, the *Mysterion* threat, and life in the 21st Century could be what the small screen needs when *Blake's 7* ends. What do other readers think?

Nice to see an article on the *Thing* cartoon series. Apart from the occasional *Book World* review there isn't much to back up the sub-title "Science Fantasy in TV,



FANTASY FEMAIL!

That was a good idea of yours to have an article on Fantasy Females, but I was shocked to find not a single picture of the beautiful Psychon — Maya from Space: 1999. Please, please could we have a large colour picture of her?

Also I would like to thank you for the article on *The Secret Service*, since I previously knew nothing of the show and I am a great Gerry Anderson fan. However, I am also surprised that we haven't had a Space: 1999 article yet and the UFO one left a lot to be desired. So now let's have less Blake's 7 material and much more Gerry Anderson material.

Merk Braxton,
Maidenhead,
Berks.

In *Starburst 20* you asked what the readers thought of your special issue on the Fabulous Fantasy Females. While it is, as you said, a radical departure from your usual *Starburst*-style features, I think it is a welcome departure and I'd like to see more of it in future issues of *Starburst*.

If you do make it a regular feature, perhaps you could focus each segment on a particular tv series or series of films. For

Cinema and *Graphics*". How about a preview of forthcoming Marvel Comics of interest to *Starburst* readers in each issue? *Star Trek*, *Micronauts*, *Ram*, *Star Wars* and several others could be showcased, perhaps in a format similar to the articles in issues 4 and 5. It need not take up too much space (2-3 pages) and might interest a few more readers who buy comics as well as movie-magazines.

Anyway, they're just a few suggestions that you might consider. Whatever, I am confident that *Starburst* will maintain the same high standard that it has had for the past 20 issues.

Low Stringer,
Works.

example, one issue you could concentrate on the ladies who appeared in the Adam West *Batman* tv series. Yvonne Craig (Batgirl), Julia Newmar (Cat Woman), Lee Merriweather (Cat Woman in the movie), Eerthe Kitt (Cat Woman in the third season of *Batman*), and maybe even Zsa Zsa Gabor (Minerva in the final episode of *Batman*), Joan Collins (The Siren), Barbara Rush (Nora Clavicle), Carolyn Jones (Mersha — next to Cat Woman, my favourite *Batman* villainess), or Anne Baxter (Zelda the Great and Olga, Queen of the Cossacks).

Alternatively, you could do a feature similar to that in issue 20 every three or four issues. Whatever you do, next time you print a feature on Fabulous Fantasy Females, please include, in colour if possible, a pic of Yvonne Craig as Batgirl, full-length like the Madeline Smith photo in issue 20. And have more pictures and less text. Tony Crawley's feature was more like the ramblings of Cosmo Smellpiece than the usual informative columns of *Things to Come*.

Anyway, to change the subject, I hear that the present series of *Blake's 7* could well be the last, and, having read that the last episode will feature the return of Roj Blake, the capture of Avon, the disintegration of Zen and the destruction of the Liberator, I am inclined to believe it. So why doesn't someone make a feature film of *Blake's 7*? After all, other tv series have ended, only to turn up in the cinema as feature films. For instance, *Doctor Who* and *Star Trek*. The Slow Motion Picture have appeared in our cinemas. So why not *Blake's 7*?

Maurice Dixon,
Stockton-on-Tees,
Cleveland.

Having read your article on Fantasy Females in *Starburst 20*, I am staggered to discover not a single word about one of the most popular stars of our time, namely



the lovely Lindsey Wegner, tv's Bionic Woman.

And no pictures of Corinne Clery (Moonraker and The Humanoïd) Nor of Lyn Lowry (The Crazies and Shivers). Nor of Linda Hayden of Hammer Films fame. Nor of Christina Paul (Vampire Circus). Nor of the Collinson



twins, Mary and Madeline (Twins of Evil). Nor of Jenny Runacre (The Final Chapter and Spectre).

So how about a *Fantasy Females Part II* to correct these oversights?

Robert Galloway,
Darlington,
Durham.



And that's only a sample of the overwhelmingly positive reception you gave our Fantasy Females feature in *Starburst 20*. Many of our male readers demanded a sequel, many of our female readers demanded a Fantasy Males feature (but weren't very forthcoming with suggestions as to potential candidates). Both are in the planning stages. The other treat we have in store for *Starburst* readers is an interview with the first lady of fantasy, Caroline Munro. Don't dare miss an issue!

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THINGS TO COME

SCIENCE FICTION TV AND CINEMA NEWS COMPILED BY TONY CRAWLEY

COPPOLA RULES!

Well, he's done it. The most provocative screen news of the year is that Francis Coppola has finally bought himself a Hollywood studio. His mate, George Lucas, might have his ranch, with all his production and post-production facilities, his own special-effects facility, Industrial Light and Magic, as well — but "Francy," as the family call him, has gone the whole hog and set himself up (and all his friends) with a nine-stage studio, complete with various offices, actors' bungalows, 34 editing rooms, a special effects section, paint, property, dressy and projection departments. It's the old Hollywood General Studios, now known as Zoetrope Studios.

It's taken Lucas' mentor and original backer months of negotiating, arguing and, finally, fighting to pull off the 6,700,000 dollar purchase. And now that he's got it, the rest of Hollywood had better look out! The way Coppola wants to work is a return to the good old days of Hollywood studios — not the mogul ruling all, but as a centre of artistry, inspiration and invention. "Our desire is to forge the future out of the past."

He's already talking of computerising his movie projects, of wanting to make a film electronically within 18 months... "There is no reason that studios can't be connected by satellite, shoring images and sounds around the world. The day is sooner than we think when films will be distributed electronically by satellite." When? Within five years he feels, when all films will be made electronically...

And so, half of all Zoetrope Studios' profits will be ploughed back into research and development, and it is to be noted that a newcomer to the Coppola family is electronics expert, Dr Zoltan Tarca-Hernock.

Like Lucas, Coppola will be maintaining his home-base in San Francisco, for business, administration, and a meeting-place for the world's writers and film-makers to join him and develop ideas — and ideals. But his new studio is where the Zoetrope films will be shot, because that's where movies are made.

Ironically, it was to get out of Hollywood — or the Hollywood system — that Coppola first set up his American Zoetrope company in San Francisco in 1968, with a 35-million-dollar loan from Warner Brothers, and a bunch of novitiate film-makers: George Lucas, John Milius, Carroll Ballard, John Korty, Jim McBride, Walter Murch, Willard Huyck. Things went very wrong after the first two movies: Coppola's *The Rain People* in 1969, which he shot on the road, pre-dating *Easy Rider* (and all the feminist films to come), and Lucas' *THX 1138*. Warners then



Comeback. The film that really made it all happen for George Lucas — "all" being *Star Wars* — was *American Graffiti*, produced by his pal, Francis Coppola. He's been drowning in money ever since his space film, so George's Lucasfilm quickly set up a *Graffiti* sequel. It seemed a good idea at the time... but it created very little interest in the United States. The *Yank* title, *Mora American Graffiti*, has perhaps wisely been yanked for the upcoming British release — here it will be billed as *The Party's Over*. The film brings back all the original stars, left to right: Ron Howard, from the tv-*Graffiti*, *Happy Days*; Cindy Williams, half of the *Happy Days* spin-off show, Laverne Platter, and Shirley, Candy Clark, Bowie's co-star in *The Man Who Fell To Earth*; and Charles Martin Smith, from *The Buddy Holly Story*. Well, maybe not all the stars... Harrison Ford's guy in the cowboy hat is missing. Understandable. He's been in about every other movie made last year.

pulled out of the deal, leaving Coppola bankrupt, just as he won an Oscar for writing *Patton*. By 1971, *The Godfather* rescued him and *Godfather II* a year later put him back on top, setting up his associates in various projects again, including Lucas' *American Graffiti*.

And now, after all the traumatic headaches of making *Apocalypse Now*, which George Lucas was going to direct first, he's back higher on top than he ever was, and the Zoetrope idea is really beginning to bear fruit. The word, by the way stems from the first moving picture machines, spinning slit-drum affairs called zoetropes — *zoe* as in life; *trope* as in revolution.

And that is exactly what this latest Coppola news means. A revolution for the Hollywood way of life. He has various people under contract — more on a family than a legal basis — from actors like Frederic Forrest, to writers Dennis O'Flaherty and Bill Bowers, and he intends making up to three movies a year, probably with, like 20th Century-Fox, a woman as his production chief — Lucy Fisher. And with Lucas, Milius, Ballard, forever around him and his plans, the future can only bode well for Francis Coppola. And more, important for us.

As he told me at Cannes last year, "Ever since I was a kid, I've loved movies. Living in San Francisco, I've become friendly with many wonderful foreign directors. Many of them cannot get the opportunity to make films. People like Dusan Makevjev, who should be making films. One of the greatest living film directors in the world, Akira Kurosawa, could not get the money to make his new film. So, if we, who are the forty-year olds, are to inherit the film industry — which we will! — I would like to be different. And I would like these people to make films. So I could see them!"

COPPOLA'S PROTEGE

Carroll Ballard is the latest Coppola protegee to make it big, after Lucas and Milius. His film *The Black Stallion*, which almost took as long to make, overcoming as many logistical difficulties as *Apocalypse*, has been wowing them in America and France, and is due in Britain in July. The film, which is more than just the story of a horse, comes from a book by Walter Farley. He started writing it at six and finished it ten years later. Since then, he's sold more than five million copies around the world — and continually refused to let companies like Disney make it into a film. He didn't, so he says, want it turned into *Lassie on Hooves*, and only sold the rights when Coppola and Ballard proved they'd make it his way. As a result of the film's success, Ballard has now ironically been signed up in a very special deal by Disney to make *Never Cry Wolf*... now will the next protegee stand up, please!

CARRIE OFF!

Princess Carrie Fisher didn't have much fortune with her first Broadway stage tryout — the British fringe export, *Censored Scenes From King Kong*, written by Howard (Rock Follies) Schuman, with music by Andy Roberts. It's the show about a journalist type trying to find the truth to the hoary old legend that the original King Kong flick had some naughty-naughty scenes excised at the last minute — and like, where are they now? Ho hum. Quite a starchy production, all the same. The journalist was played by Stephen Collins, alias *Star Trek's* Commander Decker — and Chris Sarandon, from *Dog Day Afternoon*, *Lipstick and Cuba*, was also involved.



Carrie's role? A singer-cum-dancer of noticeably scanty talent... which I'm afraid, she showed all too well. After eleven previews at the renovated Princess Theatre, the production lasted all of five performances. Then, everyone licked their wounds and Carrie and Collins, at least, went back on the ill-expenses paid promotion tours for their movies. Easier work. No critics.

ENTER: HAWK

This must be the year for the Terrys. Across the water from the Boorman film, neatly settled into Pinewood, is Lew Grade's offering in the sword and sorcery game. *Hawk the Slayer*, starring an unknown Florida actor John Terry. Hawk is his third film only after *There Goes The Bride*, filmed in his home state of Florida and directed by his Hawk helmer, Terry Mercer... and *Hot Wire* with George Kennedy and Strother Martin in Texas. The rest of the ITC cast is a right old muddle of Britishers from Bernard Bresslaw and Patrick Magee to Harry Andrews, Graham Stark and the British Film and TV Academy's TV actress of the year, Cheryl Campbell.

Top of the bill, though is the evil brother and father-killer in this epic of good over evil — namely Volten. Jack Palance, of counsel Sounds like Jack is going all the way back to his 1954 version of Attila the Hun in Douglas Sirk's *The Sign of the Cross*. Palance flew into Pinewood fresh from sterring in and directing a rather more updated version of the good vs evil game in *The Space Warriors* in Hollywood.

OMEN III

Well, what do you know? Little Damien Thorne, the kid monster from *The Omen*, the teenage terror of Damien — *Omen II*, is now fully grown... and a New Zealander. Such are the ways of movies, and the rise of one actor over another, that Omen producer Harvey Bernhard has given the lead of the third and last Omen movie to Sam Neill, the bright young Kiwi discovery from Australia's *My Brilliant Career* and New Zealand's *Sheep Dogs*. And I

must say, I applaud the decision. Neill is an excellent acting find, and it's not often that a Hollywoodite would risk even the second sequel of a hit series on such a newcomer from way outside America. I wish 'em well, including director Graham Baker.

Then again, I don't think I have to. *The Final Conflict* — *Omen III* is a pre-sold winner. Everyone wants to see what happens now that Damien is a man, and has succeeded Gregory Peck as American ambassador to London. Rest of the film's clever casting (another good job from Maud Spector) includes the lovely Lisa Harrow, the longtime unseen Rossano Brazzi, Don Gordon from the *Stetes* — and Mason Adams, too, better known perhaps as Lou Grant's managing editor on tv. The script is by Andrew Birkin, who did such a masterful job of the J.M. Barrie tv biography *The Lost Boys* with Ian Holm, and rather like the *Rocky III* to come from Stallone, it dovetails the proposed third and fourth chapters into one fell and final swoop. You have been warned!



MAD MAX BAN

Australian director George Miller was delighted at the news. In Paris, the Warner-Columbia distribution were rubbing their collective hands with glee. *Mad Max* had won the Special Jury Prize at the eighth Avoriaz Fantastic Film Festival and French cinemagoers, and there are plenty, queue around the block for festival winners. Much money was about to be made... Then the French censorship authorities all but banned the violent, futuristic movie by awarding it an X rating. In Paris, an X usually signifies pornography, whether sexual or violent. It doesn't stop a film being played, but it imposes such a strict 33% tax levy on all the receipts, that no film company in its right mind shows an X film. It would not be worth their while. They could even lose money with such a tax. So far the X-rating has succeeded in its original intention — dissuading French distributors from buying foreign-made porno movies. Now it's beginning to hit otherwise normal movies. First, Walter Hill's *The Warriors* and now George Miller's *Mad Max*.

Personally, I think the film is a lot of badly-made rubbish but that's no reason to prevent, or severely restrict, its availability to the public. It played here with a normal X, and has not, as far as I've heard, encouraged revenge trips by crazy motor-cycle vigilantes, thinking they're Mex, or even Judge Dredd...

Nicholas Meyer's excellent *Time After Time* took the top Avoriaz prize at the Alpine ski resort festival — plus the Antenne 2 TV channel's Golden Antenne award. *Mad Max* shared the jury prize with Fred Walton's highly successful American suspense, *When A Stranger Calls* — and it's about time we heard of this film's arrival in Britain, it has been building up a vast following both in America and Australia. Walton's film also shared the critics' award along with *The Fog*, from last year's *Halloween* critics' winner, John Carpenter. The festival literary honour went to Stephen King, whose *Carrion* took the top award at the 1977 event. And indeed the Carria director, Brian De Palma, was supposed to have headed this year's Avoriaz jury — Sydney Pollack sat in for him, with French critics Bernard Blier and Claude Brasseur, writer Roger Peyrefitte and directors Yves Boisset and Andre Tachine. John Carpenter was among the fest visitors and is expected to be back again next year as the jury president. But in the end, there seemed to be more French posters than international movie-makers at the event.

One director that did show was the *Nosferatu* man, Werner Herzog. He flew in to talk turkey with a producer about a new project. Whether anything came of that meeting, I don't know. What came out of Herzog deciding to go skiing everyone knew about. He finished up with a broken shoulder...

DINO'S SUPERMAN

As we went to Press, the strongest rumour in movieland — across the globe from London to New York to Hollywood — was that Dino de Laurentiis (that's right, the same chap that hatched the King Kong remake) was about to buy out producer Ilya Salkind's interests in the *Superman* film series. As per usual, no one could reach Ilya, and one of Dino's London aides denied all such happenings. On the other hand, it is said that Warner Brothers had been informed out of courtesy, of the possible change of Supie's ownership. With *Flash Gordon* due out at Christmas, it looks as if Dino simply wants it all...

MADRID FEST

Newcomer in the sf or fantastique film festival circuit earlier this year was what was rather portentously titled the 1st International Showing of Imaginary and Science Fiction Cinema of the City of Madrid. The event was set up by a couple of local film magazine writers, who feel the more renowned Stiges

festival is not as all-embracing as it should be. Well, they certainly anticed enough films to their fledgling event, from *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and *Long Weekend* from Australia, to Britain's *The Shout* and America's *Mafu Cage*. But I'm not too enraptured about any film festival which intended to close with a screening of Alejandro Jodorowsky's *El Topo*, ran into difficulties with the local projectionists and had to come up with a last minute substitute instead. Such headaches are not rare at little festivals. But surely they could have found something more imposing to climax their first gathering with than . . . Michael Winner's *The Sentinel*?



HULKING OUT

Universal's men behind the bionic shows and *The Incredible Hulk* series is hulking out . . . for real. Kenneth Johnson, writer, producer, director, is quitting Universal's *Black Towers* for London. Although he keeps an office at the studio, and continues as "non exclusive executive producer" (whatever that means) for the *Hulk* shows, he's moving here to direct a four-hour NBC tele-film on the original bionic men, *Ivanhoe*.

ALIEN NEWS

ALIENSTATION

They certainly don't waste time in Hollywood. *Alien* has been sold to television, already. Ridley Scott's biggie has been snapped up by the big ABC network for a sterling price of 12-million dollars. It's one of those special deals tied to the kind of money the film makes in cinemas — the more *Alien* pulls in, the higher the telly price-tag rises. In the end, ABC will probably have to fork out 15-million dollars — for about five airings only and not until 1983. The same network has already paid out 10-million dollars for *Close Encounters* — and will probably have to pay double before they screen that one on the box. But in the end that's nothing for a successful outfit like ABC. They recently parted with 60-million dollars for a batch of eleven Columbia movies including *Midnight Express*, *Kramer vs Kramer* and even Ken Russell's old *Tommy*. Once in a while they find a real bargain, by settling a tele-deal before a movie has opened — which is how ABC nabbed *The China Syndrome* for peanuts: 3,500,000 dollars. Well, you win some you lose some. But the name of the US-TV game is spend anything to win viewers . . .

ALIEN II?

The burning question of the year is getting more intense. Will 20th Century-Fox lose any *Alien II* movie? Not that we care, as long as if it's made, it's made well. But Fox ex-production chief Alan Ladd Jnr, the man who gave the go-ahead to *Star Wars* end, of course *Alien*, has now formed his own Ladd Company and has finalised a long-term pact with part of the *Alien* team. The two co-producers in fact, David Giler and Welter Hill, and their own combine The Phoenix Company, with Joseph Gellegher. As I think I've said before here, if Fox mess around for too long with their decision on a second *Alien* feature, I'm sure Alan Ladd will make it instead.

ALIENERS

Meenwhile, the other *Alien* guys, Den O'Bannon and his partner Ronel Shusett, have begun shooting *Dead and Buried* in Mendocino County. Gery Sherman directs the Shusett-O'Bannon script, starring old-timer Jack Albertson with husky James Farentino and cute Melody Anderson. Shusett also produces with one Robert Renbress and Quinn Yarboro is working hard on the paperback book which Werners will release in the States around August. Werners have already sold 1,500,000 copies of the *Alien* paperback. But they haven't got the new O'Bannon film yet. It's an independent venture, up for distribution grebs . . . Could be yours if you've got a few million.



S



STAR WARS III

Talking turkey has already begun on the third *Star Wars* adventure... In Hollywood, the chieftains of 20th Century-Fox, say they'll continue to distribute and have, in fact, won a better deal on the third than the second film. Apparently, Fox expect a modest distributors' fee only on *The Empire Strikes Back*, which is wholly a George Lucas' Black Falcon production

and release. In typically over-wordy Hollywoodese, Fox men Alan J. Hirschfield explains the better Fox terms for the third movie stem from the "recognition that it was in both sides' interest to have more upside potential." How's that again? "Sometimes, you can make too good a deal." That sounds like blasphemy from a Hollywood executive.



OBITUARIES

Gene Steele, 55, TV sound-recordingist on such Paramount series as *Mork and Mindy* died in January, eight days before the death of the *Mork* shows veteran production manager, Don Turpin, who also worked on *Angie*, *Rhoda* and for the Filmation animation studios.

Bernard Kaun, 80, who orchestrated Max Steiner's throbbing score for *King Kong* (1932), has died from a heart attack in Baden-Baden, West Germany, where he had retired at 60. He had about a hundred film scores to his composing credit, and is said to have ghosted some of the Gongs with the Wind music, officially credited to Max Steiner.

Jerry Fielding, 57, whose movie-scores included Oscar nominations for *The Wild Bunch*, *The Outlaw Josey Wales*, and Britain's toughest horror movie *Straw Dogs*, has died while working in Canada.

CARKEYS AND...?

Latest cop show on the American tube, *B.A.D. Cats*, is all about these two 'tecs from the burglary-auto-detail. The car theft department, to us. The new duo are opposites, of course. Asher Breuner is dark, Italian, street smart, while Steven Hanks is blond, cool and closer to nature. Vic Morrow is their long-suffering veteran chief and Jimmy Walker is a black cohort from the wrong side of the tracks. Sounds familiar. You bet your *TV Times* it is. The show emanates from Aaron Spelling, one of the two *Starky* and *Hutch* producers, and

it's on the same channel, too, ABC. They could have called it *Carkeys* and *Clutch* but for one slight deviation. The cops have a female partner, Michella Pfeiffer (say that in a hurry and your teeth fly out the window). She looks a runaway from *Charlie's Angels*. But of course she does. Aaron Spelling co-produces that show, too. So it goes... So does Spelling. He's lately completed his 74th and 75th tele-movies for ABC, *Sizzle* and *Murder Can Kill You*. So can too much lookalike tv, Aaron.

DRAC AGAIN

The next *Dracula* film is not what you'd call evergreen for the genre. It's called *Dracula Sucks*, which was, incidentally, the original title of George Hamilton's *Love At First Bite*, and stars Jamie Gillis as the count. His victims include Annette Haven and Sarena. These names tell all. In America, it's a herd-core porno film. In Britain, when released by Entertainment Films, it will be somewhat cleaned up, though still X-certified, I'm sure. Philip Mershek directs, from a exploitation script by David J. Kern and producer Darryl A. Mershek. You have been warned...

AT LAST: MERLIN

Give a cheer, raise your glasses and a fleg or two, why not... John Boorman has actually — finally — started shooting *Merlin* and the *Knights of the King Arthur* at the National Film Studios, Ardmole, Ireland (where else?). John is producing and directing, but of course,

with Tony Pierce-Roberts on camera. And the stars include Nicol Williamson as Merlin, ravishing Helen Mirren as Morgana, Robert Addie is the dreaded Mordred, Nicholas Clay as Lancelot and luscious Cheri Lunghi (recently seen on BBC 1, in Moliere's *Misanthrope* with Ian Holm) as Queen Guinevere. Which leaves only . . . let's see now, well Arthur himself. Wearing the crown is one Nigel Terry.

RETURN OF FLASHES

007 producer Cubby Broccoli takes a rest from superspies with a gangster thriller, *The Professor* by Jack Lynn . . . while old Hammerhead Jimmy Sangster switches from horror to espionage, writing a new US TV series *Once Upon a Spy* . . . Kurt Vonnegut's short story, *Deer in the Works*, has been filmed in Hollywood . . . Max J. Rosenberg's horror movie, *Asylum* (1972) has finally opened Stateside as *House of Crazies*, which might be news to star Peter Cushing . . . 20th Century-Fox are piecing together some of the *Planet of the Apes* TV



shows, into five two-hour tele-flicks . . . Bryan Forbes has replaced the too busy Lewis Gilbert as director of Roger Moore's London segment for the comedy tale of four cities, *Sunday Lovers* . . . Werner Brothers TV is, hush, hush, preparing a pilot and possible series about a



EXORCIST ROW

William Friedkin, in enough hot water with his vicious gay murder film, *Cruising*, ran into more trouble when *The Exorcist* was aired on local TV stations during the Winter Olympics. He may have worked hard on adjusting, shall we say, his grisly horror picture to suit TV standards. But a lot of viewers did not agree. In Minneapolis, for example, up to 6,000 people phoned the local WCCO-TV station complaining about the movie. They jammed all 12 phone lines and some people were so irate they

waited two hours to vent their spleens. In Detroit, nine people picketed the WJBK TV station. Most companies warned their viewers about the film, to keep it away from kids and so on, but the anger went on unabated. The Minneapolis Star newspaper fanned the coming fire by warning its readers off the film: "When *The Exorcist* was produced in 1973, it was the most shocking film ever made . . . It is NOT an ordinary movie." No doubt, Bill Friedkin regards that as a good review!



young fellow who is (almost reluctantly) endowed with superhuman powers, a kind of anti-Superman . . . If you see Farrah Fawcett in the old *Charlie's Angels* shows on French TV during your holidays, no it's not her talking French, but one Beatrice Delf. Roger Moore's French voice is supplied by Claude Berrend. Just thought you'd like to know . . . James Naughton, dimly recalled as one of the two astronaut stars of 1974's short-lived (14 episodes) *Planet of the Apes* TV series, is now playing the doctor tending Mary Tyler Moore in the Broadway's new version of Brian Clark's play, *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* . . . Charlie's Angel Jaclyn Smith (the only one who has survived all the comings and goings) wins her biggest movie break, opposite Robert Mitchum in *Nightkill*, co-financed by Hollywood and West Germany, and shot in Texas by Ted Post, who made *Beneath the Planet of the Apes* in 1970 . . . but not a lot since . . .

THE STAR WARS SAGA CONTINUES



STAR THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK WARS

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BILLY DEE WILLIAMS · ANTHONY DANIELS

Directed by DAVID PROWSE · KENNY BAKER · PETER MAYHEW · FRANK OZ

Executive Producers IRVIN KERSHNER · RICK KURTZ
Concepts by LEIGH BRACKETT · and LAWRENCE KASDAN · Story by GEORGE LUCAS
Screenplay by GEORGE LUCAS · Music by JOHN WILLIAMS



Soundtrack recorded in Dolby Stereo



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When Time Ran Out...



When Time Ran Out (1980)

Paul Newman (as Hank Anderson), Jacqueline Bisset (Kay Kirby), William Holden (Shelby Gilmore), Edward Albert (Brian), Red Buttons (Francis Friendly), Barbara Carrera (Iolani), Valentina Cortese (Rose Valdez), Burgess Meredith (Rene Valdez), Ernest Borgnine (Tom Conti), James Franciscus (Bob Spangler).

Directed by James Goldstone, Screenplay by Carl Foreman and Stirling Silliphant, Music by Lalo Schiffrin, Edited by Edward Biery and Freeman A. Davies, Production Design by Philip Jefferies, Special Photographic Effects by L.B. Abbott, Special Effects by Robert McDonald and Joe Unsinn, Produced by Irwin Allen.

Time: 109 mins

Cart: A

A STARBURST FILM REVIEW BY JOHN BROSNAN

Paul Newman and Jacqueline Bisset are sitting together on a beach. He leans across and kisses her... and immediately their lips meet there is an ominous rumbling sound and the beach starts to shake. One's first reaction is to marvel at the power generated by two super stars kissing each other but no, the rumbling and shaking is not emanating from them but from a volcano some distance away. And as the camera cut to a very bad matte shot of a model volcano on the horizon the preview audience cheered, because at long last something was actually happening in this movie, almost an hour after it had started.

Regular readers will know I'm not a fan of Irwin Allen's cinematic output ("cinematic output" seems too nice a way of describing what Mr Allen has produced over the years) and some have accused me of being too hard on him. But I defy the world's greatest Irwin Allen fan to sit through *When Time Ran Out* and still come out singing his praises. It is not a good movie. It is not even a good *bad* movie like his previous stinker *The Swarm*.

It's set on a Pacific island inhabited by a group of wealthy Americans and a few token natives. The first hour concerns the various marital problems of the



Americans and resembles a bad episode of *Dallas* (no, I'm being too cruel — *Dallas* has never plunged to such depths of banality). The island is owned by rich and selfish Bob Spangler (*James Franciscus*), a character obviously modelled on the one Richard Chamberlain played in Allen's *Towering Inferno*, and he is refusing to admit that the island's resident volcano is about to blow its top, even after he's taken a trip down into its fiery crater in a special cage (an unlikely event but it provides the film with its only original sequence).

Once the volcano does blow up the movie turns into a remake of Allen's *Posidon Adventure* set on dry land. While the majority of people choose to remain at Spangler's luxury hotel, Paul Newman fills in for Gene Hackman by leading the few smart ones to safety on the other side of the island. You might think at this stage that you're in for some excitement but you'd be wrong — instead of a series of different incidents most of this section of the film is concerned with the crossing of a single bridge. Yes, the bridge is spanning a lava flow and is slowly collapsing but that's not enough to sustain the necessary suspense for very long. Never in the

history of motion pictures has it taken one group of people so long to cross a bridge. And when they finally cross it and you think, good, now we can get on with the rest of the movie, you then discover that there *is* no more, apart from a quick shot of the hotel being blown up by volcanic fireballs.

Which leads me to the special effects — they are *not* good. The fringe lines in all the matte shots are thicker than Joan Crawford's eyebrows and the mattes themselves are incredibly shaky. So shaky, in fact, that whenever there's a cut to the volcano it seems to be trying to edge its way sideways off the screen. And I don't blame it for being embarrassed. One can only presume that most of the budget went on getting stars like Newman, Bisset and William Holden and the effects men were left with practically nothing, a situation similar to the one the audience finds itself in at the end of the picture.

Take my advice — unless you happen to be Irwin Allen's mum (and if you are, what are you doing reading this magazine?) give this one a miss and hope that with his next picture old Irwin will be back in his usual form... bad, but not *this* bad.



A STARBURST FILM REVIEW
BY PHIL EDWARDS

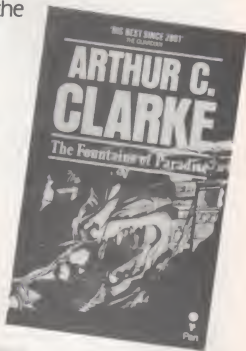
TOOLBOX MURDERS



Toolbox Murders is one of those thoroughly tasteless exercises in schlock that American film makers revel in. The premise is simple. A deranged psycho sets about killing all the "evil" women in an apartment block in an effort to repay the death of his daughter in an auto accident. Cameron Mitchell does away with the ladies using an assortment of weapons from his toolbox — a power drill, a claw hammer, a screw driver, a rivet gun, etc — in a few bloody opening scenes and then the film settles down to little more than talk. Mitchell, as usual, goes way over the top, blubbering and simpering away at a kidnap victim whom he keeps in childish luxury and mistakes from time to time for his dead daughter. The feature only comes vaguely to life when he is confronted by his equally psychopathic nephew and a bloody fight ensues. Censor cuts totalling about four minutes have shortened all the scenes of carnage but the film still leaves a nasty after-taste.

The outer reaches of the speculative imagination...

For decades Arthur C. Clarke has looked into the future with a clarity of vision that is almost prophetic. Now he has produced his most dazzling work yet, *The Fountains of Paradise*, a glimpse into the 22nd Century when technology will clash with ancient wisdom as man stretches the limits of his capabilities.



On the murky outskirts of the solar system, a lonely star, Briareus Delta, has exploded, emitting monstrous doses of radiation that plunges our planet into an apocalyptic twilight...



PAN SCIENCE FICTION

THE JOHN CARPENTER FILE

by Tony Crawley

It's taken an age and a half for Hollywood to awaken to the talents of John Carpenter. And it took a non-fantasy tv movie to do it. Elvis, or as this pelvisography is known in our cinemas, *Elvis — The Movie*. When that creamed the combined attack of *Gone with the Wind* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* in the US-tv ratings last year, suddenly all Hollywood was asking: John Who...?

Elvis made his name. *Halloween*, his fourth feature (third for cinemas) reinforced it by pulling in 20-million dollars in very rapid order at the Stateside box-office. Now the cry was: *I don't care who just get him!* Too late. We've already got him. EMI has a three-picture deal with him starting this year...

Carpenter, then, is now in the Spielberg bracket. Except he doesn't need Spielberg's whacky kind of eight-figure budgets. Carpenter is a film-maker, not a money-spender.

At *Starburst*, we like to feel we helped discover John Carpenter. He may not agree (well, so many people make the same claim). We don't care. We feel we played our part. Dez Skinn was instrumental in persuading London distributor David Grant, of Oppidan, that yes, indeed, *Dark Star* was well worth picking up for British distribution. Although BBC-tv had already obtained the film direct from America and screened it over Christmas, 1977, it was

A special profile on the director whose sf cult film, *Dark Star*, was examined in depth in *Starburst* 5.



the Oppidan cinema release of *Dark Star* which made Britain truly Carpenter-conscious. And we feel (or Dez Skinn does) that we helped bring this about.

So we care what's happening to our protege, where he's at, where he's going (*up*, no doubt about that), what he's doing and why. This is the reason behind this special update on the most interesting (by far) of the newer American movie-makers. Yes, more so than Lucas and Spielberg...

Carpenter, after all, has already made more movies than those two combined. Moreover, he tackles more diverse subjects and genres — not every one is geared to his *Starburst* fans. We can't complain about that, for he's growing, considerably, as a director with every outing. He does things his way. He shares, for example, one fact in common with Lucas; they both made a science-fiction short while at the University of Southern California's film school — and revamped it for the cinema later. Lucas had Francis Coppola backing him. Carpenter had himself. He still does. He's a true independent.

His speed of work — seven films inside three years — matches his output of about 15 shorts as a USC student, resulting in his 1970 Oscar-winning short, *The Resurrection of Bronco Billy*.

John has already fully discussed *Dark Star* with us ('basically it is an absurdist comedy'; see *Starburst* Vol 1, No 5). This time, we're continuing from where we left off, with notes, comments, credits, of everything from his second feature onwards... to more news of what should be his most devastating project, *The Prometheus Crisis* — which if you need labels, is quite simply *The China Syndrome* for real!

To complete this file, we've talked — in the main — to the men (and women) who all feel they know him best. His producers.

ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13

(1976). Written, edited (as John T. Chance), scored, directed by John Carpenter, for Irwin Yablans and Moustapha Akkad's CCK Productions. Starring: Austin Stoker, Derwin Joston, Laurie Zimmer, Martin West, Tony Burton, Charles Cyphers, Nancy Loomis, Peter Bruini, John J. Fox, Kim Richards, Marc Ross, Alan Ross, Henry Brandon, Lisa Richards.

John Carpenter: An investor from Philadelphia approached me and basically gave me *carte blanche* to make a film. I'd always wanted to do an old-fashioned Howard Hawks' type of Western — out of the question unless you had a big star. I thought I'd do a Western in disguise, a modern-day Western — youth gangs as Indians and really stylise it and go from there. I didn't expect *Assault* to be a big hit, because in intent and style and content, it's completely unlike any other film being made in America. In England they understood it fully.



Executive producer Irwin Yablans: I owe a great deal to London. When I had *Assault* in America, quite frankly it was not a success. Had it not been for its success in England, I probably would not have had the courage to go forward with *Halloween*. Your country may be a very small percentage in terms of money in the world but I dismiss the money — I had to believe that people who were that literate, that astute about film, would go for *Halloween*. That gave me the incentive to go on. I credit some of this to Michael Hyers of Miracle Films. He did a helluva job with *Assault*. The

The only other case I can recall where Britain was right and America wrong about a film was Bonnie and Clyde.

Well, we're re-releasing *Assault* in the United States as a result of Britain, and, of course, *Halloween*. I can think of a few situations where we in America discovered films that England sort of discarded. That's taught me about the whole Anglo-American relationship. Although we're very close and talk the same language — so to speak — there is a total difference in attitudes, mores and values. We're different peoples. You are Europeans. Maybe you're not even Europeans... The mistake can be made and it should never be overlooked — we don't understand each other that well all the time.

Script Supervisor/Assistant editor Debra Hill was living with Carpenter at the time: That's really what brought us to working together. We shared ideas. I helped him and finally started writing on my own... and then came *Halloween*.

SOMEONE'S WATCHING ME

(1978) Written, directed by John Carpenter, for Warner Brothers/NBC-TV. *Starring:* Lauren Hutton, David Birney, Adrienne Barbeau, Charles Cyphers, Granger Hines, Lea of the Critics' Prize at the Seventh Avioraz Saunders. Shooting schedule: 18 days. Transmitted by BBC-1, October 8, 1979.

Notes: First professional meeting of Carpenter and Adrienne — they were married on January 1, 1979. She makes her big screen debut in his seventh film, *The Fog*, after several TV-shows, including the *Maude* series. Most likely she'll be in his eighth movie, *The Prometheus Crisis* as well; ironic, as her first telefilm to rock Britain, *Red Alert*, was also a nuclear-plant disaster thriller.



Adrienne Barbeau: I've always done television. Usually, I go in and just do what I do. Occasionally, a director says "Do a little bit more of this, a little less of that", but I don't ask a lot of questions. I pretty well know what I'm going to do. And if the director wants something else, I try to adapt. With John, I've been more apt to say "How I'm going to try this — what do you think?" or "Does it sound right?" or something like that. He pretty much leaves me alone though.

John Carpenter: I think the point... was that the killer was unknown. That should have been the point of *Eyes of Laura Mars* (his script, directed by Irvin Kershner), but it was not. There are basically two problems to television... You never have enough time to shoot a project... Secondly, there is the problem of censorship. It's really aggravating. I've never shot a scene that I know of that had a censorship problem. I would have made it more violent. It would have been tougher.

HALLOWEEN

(1978). Co-written (with producer Debra Hill), scored, directed by John Carpenter, for Irwin Yablans' Compass International. *Starring:* Donald Pleasence, Jamie Lee Curtis, Nancy Loomis, P.J. Soles, Charles Cyphers, Kyle Richards, Brian Andrew, John Michael Graham, Nancy Stephens, Arthur Malet, Mickey Yablans, Brent La Page, Adam Hollander, Robert Phalen, Tony Moran, Will Sandin, Sandy Johnson, David Kyle, Peter Griffith, Jim Windburn, Nick Castle. (Winner of the Critics Prize at the Seventh Avioraz Fantasy Film Festival January 1979 and the Golden Unicorn Grand Prix at the eighth Paris International SF Film Festival, on April 1 1979).

Executive Producer Irwin Yablans: First of all, with all due respect to John Carpenter—you know I'm his discoverer? — I don't believe John was the only element of *Halloween's* success. The interesting thing about it is that this is a film based on a story, a legend that for 75 years lay dormant... I was sitting around one day on an airplane and it came to me to do a picture on *Halloween*, which is really a big and interesting holiday in America. All the kids love it. And in 75 years of film-making, why hasn't somebody made a film about it? The idea occurred to me like that. Hey, from now on if I think of a good idea, I won't cancel it out by saying if it was good why hasn't somebody else thought of it... that's why I'm doing *Valentine's Day* next, a low-budget picture I'm cooking up with Francis Coppola.

When I called John and asked if he'd do *Halloween*, I also asked if he thought it was too trite an idea. He said: Irwin, it's fantastic. It just excites the hell out of me. Let's do it. I said: I don't have a lot of money, John. He said: No, no, no, it's fine. When he finished the film, I was overwhelmed. Not only was the idea a good one, not only was it able to be exploited — but he'd made a great scary film.

John Carpenter. We'd had an idea to do a film, a horror film about these three girls in a small town that are stalked by... you fill in the blank. There's something out there! I tossed at Irwin the idea: Let's have it happen on *Halloween* night. He called me up one night and asked: Do you think it's on the nose to call it *Halloween*? And at that moment, the whole movie took shape for me and I said: That's the greatest! It is a great title. Somehow that raised the film to another level. It's not just a story about something stalking three girls; it's a story about all scary stuff. If I titled the film, *The Babysitter Killer*, a real schlocky kinda title, it would be a little, tiny thing. But calling it *Halloween*, you can take more chances, you can be broader, because it's about *Halloween* night — when you're a little kid and you get scared. It's a fantasy.

What I wanted to make was a kind of a sub-genre horror movie about the psychopath, but at the same time explore the whole feeling of *Halloween* night. I wrote it in about two weeks, and we were shooting three weeks later.



Above: Nancy Loomis as a victim of the mysterious killer in John Carpenter's seasonal shocker, *Halloween*.

Irwin Yablans: Some of the parameters had been: Let's make an old-fashioned movie. Let's be unashamedly imitative of some great masters like Hitchcock. Let's not make it gory, explicit. Just let's scare people. When you say "bool" at the right time, you don't need blood. It's the time that has to be explicit, not the blood. Hitchcock was the biggest faker in the world and I say that with reverence. The "bool" happens in the head.

John Carpenter: I enjoy scaring people a lot. Suspense, comedy, the genre things — I'm big on form and structure . . . loaded with scares, suspense scares, hopefully not grisly or gory, making people sit on the edge of their seats.

Irwin Yablans: When we showed *Halloween* to the first preview audience, they literally screamed and hollered and tore the place apart. That was all I had to see. I knew then that we had a big hit. Quite frankly, I didn't know *how* big it could be — who knows what is up today. There's no way to predict the top. The bottom is easy (*laugh*), not the top. But Carpenter is so talented . . . I still don't know how much is the idea or how much is Carpenter. But it's the mixture that made it work.

I'm kinda disappointed that John and I aren't making another film together immediately. We made two and they were both successful. But I wish him well, because nobody should be the captive of another man, you know.



A particularly bizarre scene from *Halloween*.

Have you two fallen out . . ?

Not at all. We were ready to go on to something — and somebody got there a little faster! I'm proud, at least, that the people in the business who really do know about us both, know about my input and that John is well on his way to becoming one of the more important directors in the world . . . In America, *Halloween* is unequivocally the most successful motion picture ever made without a major release. I thought of a slogan for my company as a result: Compass International — the major alternative!

The only risk with Halloween abroad was the title — it's a US holiday only.

That's just the point! I tried to impress the distributors at the beginning who said exactly the same silly thing. If the movie had to depend on a particular holiday with a particular significance once a year, I wouldn't have made it. It's just like Francis' *Apocalypse Now*. I've heard complaints about that title. I say: Yeah, a title isn't well known until it's a success. Dr. Zivago wasn't exactly the most exciting title in the world. *Halloween* is a big smash in Italy. Denmark's a smash. Germany opens soon and I predict that's a smash. France is not sold . . . well, we all know the French are special. The best cinema going public in the world, but more supportive of local cinema. *Halloween*, October 31, may not have been an international holiday, but we might be making it one. I've appropriated an American institution! We're about to open the film again in America. We can run it every year from now on.

ELVIS THE MOVIE

(1979). Directed by John Carpenter (written and produced by Anthony Lawrence) for Dick Clark Motion Pictures Inc./ABC-TV. *Starring:* Kurt Russell, Shelley Winters, Bing Russell, Robert Gray, Season Hubley, Pat Hingle, Melody Anderson, Ed Begley, Jr., James Cunniff, Charles Cyphers, Peter Hobbes, Les Lannon, Will Jordan, Joe Mantegna, Ellen Travolta, Charlie Hodge, Felicia Fenske, Randy Gray. Shooting schedule: 31 days.



Executive Producer Dick Clark: In all honesty, John Carpenter was not my first choice as director. As John would be the first to know, many directors — and many actors — were afraid of the project. Because it was a borderline case. It could be very good or it could be dreadful. We all knew that, going in. We needed someone who is daring . . . daring enough to risk what reputation they had. Time worked, too. John hadn't achieved the *Halloween* reputation yet. He was not one of the hottest young directors in the world. He was daring enough to risk whatever he had going, though, and certainly interesting enough for us.

We all got together at the same time, sharing the same risk. The actor, Kurt Russell, took a great chance. He could ruin his career. Or he could make it. Very interesting . . . And it's turned out to be the silver lining for everybody involved. A lovely situation, especially when you're skirting the edge of *absolute failure*!

Kurt Russell in the title role of Elvis the Movie.

Kurt Russell (Who played Elvis): John Carpenter was, I feel, and always will feel, the perfect choice for the film — because we had 31 days, we had to work hard. He made sure we had rehearsal time. He was very interested in my part, my character and we soon got on even ground together. So that when we got to shooting, we had no questions for each other.

Season Hubley (the new Mrs Russell, who played Mrs Elvis Presley): Right! John was, I think, just the greatest director I've ever worked with. We'd get together with him and just rap for maybe eight hours straight about the film and the characterisations. A great help to me, because I didn't have a lot to go on, as far as written stuff about Priscilla was concerned. I'd just finished *The Hardcore Life* for Paul Schrader — an incredible writer, very open to suggestions, we'd re-write scenes together. But Paul doesn't direct an actor very much. Yet. Maybe he won't ever. A lot of directors don't. At times, I want more feedback and John Car-

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

(1979). Co-written (with producer Debra Hill) and directed by John Carpenter for Ten-Four Productions NBC-TV. Starring: Harold Gould, Harry Morgan.

Producer Debra Hill: It's a black comedy about people breaking out of an old folks' home and stealing a train. Our original title had been *Grey Panther Express*. [And before that, *Grey Panther Revolt*]. What they're fighting for, of course, is freedom and respectability as old folks. In this country, we don't really treat our older people very nicely.

John Carpenter: On TV assignments: You never have . . . really the time to get it perfect. I just had to storyboard as much as I could, get as prepared as I could, and do it within the time allowed.



Producer Debra Hill with Jamie Lee Curtis on the set of *The Fog*.

penter was great feedback. You talk, talk and talk, and he'd listen and then we'd find something. He likes to take that time.

Kurt Russell. And that was really needed. As we got going, we felt we needed more in the scenes with Elvis and Priscilla. In the beginning, her character was written so blandly that it was through our conversations with John that we felt we were able to bring some more — we felt, truth — put more dramatic impact into it. That took a lot of time. If we'd not been able to talk to him before, we'd never have had a chance to do that so effectively. We would not have had the time. Besides that — he is *obviously* a very talented guy.

John Carpenter: Again, it's a very stylised film, and in that sense it's very real. My feeling towards Elvis and what he did for rock and roll are the stylisation . . . He was a hero in the classical sense. He touched my life a lot, and I want to get that across in the film.

THE FOG

Carpenter for Charles Bloch's Entertainment Ventures Inc/Avco Embassy Pictures. Starring: Adrienne Barbeau, Hal Holbrook, Janet Leigh, Jamie Lee Curtis, John Houseman, Tommy Atkins, Nancy Loomis, Charles Cyphers, Ty Mitchell and John Carpenter. (Winner of the Critics' Prize at the Eighth Avoriaz fantasy film festival, January 1980).

John Carpenter: The deal had been set up based on an idea I had. I just went in and talked to the people at Avco Embassy and said: I want to do a ghost story and I want to call it *The Fog*. And it's about this mist. And they said: Yes.

Adrienne Barbeau (Mrs Carpenter): On the first day of shooting we were so intent on being so professional, about half way through, he said: I'm not having any fun. Then we sort of relaxed and we've been having a really good time.

John Carpenter: She's so good and so easy to direct. It's a difficult role. She plays a disc jockey who works in a light-house all alone, and has to react without any other actors around. I'm extremely pleased with what we've done. But the real star of the show is the fog itself.

Production Designer Tommy Wallace (who's worked on all Carpenter's films): After *Halloween*, the crew have been calling this one *Fogoween* . . .



Notes: Carpenter also conducts his score of the film, as performed by his own musical group, no, not *The Carpenters* — the *Coupe de Villes*. Also to be heard on the soundtrack: *The Coupettes*, a new singing trio comprising Carpenter regulars Nancy Loomis, Jamie Lee Curtis and Debra Hill . . .

Above: *The Fog* swirls round a curious sailing ship. Below: Carpenter poses with the ladies of his latest movie *The Fog* (left to right) Jamie Lee Curtis, Adrienne Barbeau and Janet Leigh.



Photos: Kim Gortlieb

PROMETHEUS CRISIS

(1979). Written, scored and directed by John Carpenter for producers George G. Braunstein and Ron Hamady and Chelsea Pictures. No casting announced at present time.

John Carpenter: All of us liked the original idea: what happens when a nuclear plant melts down. It melts into the earth, releasing giant clouds of radioactive steam. While nuclear reactors are sobering topics of conversation these days, this does not preclude a film on the subject being thrilling, suspenseful. The unique combination of horror and special-effects ensure a high-quality film, an extremely commercial piece of sheer entertainment.



Co-producer George G. Braunstein: I got John involved in March last year. He's known for kinda entertaining, scary horror films . . . I told him: This is one of the scariest subjects there is. Instead of making it as a disaster movie, let's make it like a technological horror story. Rather than a tarantula or a mummy . . . it's going to be about a nuclear plant. I'm not really political or an anti-nuke activist, I don't want a message movie or an environmental movie — just a horror story.

We had to fight like mad to get our budget of 7-million dollars—close to a million on special effects alone, to show the intense heat of, say, one of the command console safety doors simply melting . . . John is setting up our own special effects unit. We're not farming it out to another company or studio. He's going to use, possibly, the Dark Star people: Dan O'Bannon and one of the top men at Universal. John has also — and I'm really, genuinely excited by this — found a way to combine the effects and the really horrific story in a unique manner. That's why we

have a red Top Secret sign on the script. Nobody has read it! The actors were talking to (Kris Kristofferson, Gene Hackman, Jon Voigt, Roy Scheider) only get to see their parts.

How did you meet up with John?

Initially through Dark Star and he used to teach screenwriting at the University of Southern California. I liked Dark Star a lot. I knew Assault on Precinct 13 was soft in America, but in London I saw it with lines around the block. I've lived in London three years and while in some ways California is ahead of time, I think in many ways, London is, too. I had this funny hunch that maybe John was going to suddenly take off. I knew he was good, but he didn't have the muscle. And it was fortunate, the timing. We got together, made the agreement, then he did a TV show, *Someone's Watching Me* at Warners, which was really well received. Then *Halloween* came out, which was gigantic, and then he did *Elvis*.

I'll tell you a funny story . . . John and Adrienne were over at my house for dinner the night before *Elvis* showed. We saw another Dick Clark tv show about the history of rock 'n' roll, we had a really nice time but he was nervous all evening. The next night, *Elvis* was playing against *Gone With the Wind* and *Cuckoo's Nest* — giants in the industry. John was sure his movie would come in last which would not do him much good. Well, you know what happened — an unbelievable sweep of people watched his show . . .

Kurt Russell (Carpenter's *Elvis*): We didn't know it was going to happen. All three networks had just put so much money into that night. We were coming home from a party, and we noticed there wasn't too much traffic that night.

Season Hubley (Mrs Russell and Carpenter's Priscilla Presley): There wasn't any traffic. It was amazing!

George Braunstein: After that night, John had gotten the attention of all the big majors with their big cigars and their big cheque-books, wooing him in a way I could never woo him. I just don't have that kinda power and prestige.

You could have lost him, you mean? No, he's such a straight guy. I was there when he was there, not when he and the personality and the

money-making was there. We have a good relationship with John. Not just me, everything I say relates to my business partner, Ron Hamady, too. He knows that Ron and I have invested a lot of our personal money to keep this project alive. For months we had no further to look than each other to write another cheque. What makes John so special in the media and everywhere else, is that he's a straightforward craftsman. He's serious. He's not a dilettante. He wants to make good movies and he does it reasonably. He doesn't want some giant mansion. He lives like we live. He lives in a small, little house in the hills, and his love and desire is to make movies that people will want to go see. He's a hard worker. I was on the set of *The Fog* and he was very serious and intense. His main desire is to entertain people.

But can you ever sign him up again?

No, not now. Thanks to your EMI. You've got him locked up for about three years.

Well, we discovered him.

Well, I tell you, he'll deliver for you, too. He really makes good products.

EL DIABLO

(1980) To be co-written (with co-producer Debra Hill and production designer Tommy Wallace), scored and directed by John Carpenter for EMI.

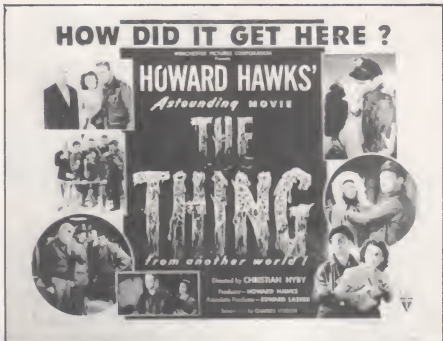
Notes. This is the EMI ad artwork. Except for one small detail. The script hasn't been written yet! "I hope he fits in my train-crash," says publicist behind the ad company.



THE THING

(1980 or '81). To be written (with Debra Hill, no doubt), from J.W. Campbell Jr's book, *Who Goes There*, scored and directed by John Carpenter for producers David Foeter and Larry Truman at Universal.

The 1951 Howard Hawks production *The Thing* (... *From Another World*) — officially credited Hawks' editor, Christian Nyby, as director, although all movie-buffs, Carpenter included, see Hawks' style stamped indelibly all over it; Orson Welles is also supposed to have lent a hand in the shooting — has always remained one of Carpenter's favourite movies. That's why Halloween had the baby-sat kids watching it on TV.



John Carpenter: 'It scared the living hell out of me when I was young. I mean, I couldn't believe what I was seeing... It was so frightening!'

For his version, his first film for a major Hollywood company — fame at last! — Carpenter intends remaining much closer to the book that inspired Hawks. What fascinates him most about the story—and given his low budget, what probably defeated Hawks in 1951 — is that Campbell's alien visitor (thawed out of an Arctic spaceship crash by a group of American scientists) was able to take on the physical identity of his victims. Sure makes him harder to catch than in the version according to Hawks, when the alien was, of all people, Gunsmoke's James Arness, dressed up in a boiler suit!

Deep in the heart of the Carpathian Mountains lives a scientist, Dr Janos Rukh (*Boris Karloff*). He has developed a telescope of a unique design. Not only can he study the heavens, but he can also look deep into space and see through time to the developments of the Universe many thousands of years before. He discovers that a meteorite has fallen to Earth many centuries before and calculates that it landed in Africa in the region of the Mountains of the Moon. He leads an expedition there, along with his wife Diane (*Francis Drake*), his assistant Ronald Drake (*Frank Lawton*) and fellow scientist Dr Benet (*Bela Lugosi*). They discover the meteorite has fallen into an extinct volcano. Rukh descends into the pit and reclaims some of the meteorite which he names Radium X.

However, all is not right with Rukh who has absorbed poison from the strange mineral. Not only does he glow in the dark, but he discovers his touch means instant death. Radium X, despite its healing properties, is a deadly substance. It begins to affect his brain. Rukh becomes jealous of the attention that Ronald is paying to his wife and he also believes his fellow scientists are trying to steal his discovery. Rukh's madness grows. Soon he is not only glowing in the dark and disposing of his friends and relations, but he has also developed the power to kill by a concentrated look from his contaminated eyes — the "invisible ray" of the title.

The *Invisible Ray* was produced by the kings of Thirties fantasy, Universal Pictures, in 1936 to capitalise on the success of their previous Karloff-Lugosi star vehicles, *The Black Cat* (1934) and *The Raven* (1935). The feature was directed by Lambert Hillyer, who, in the same year, lensed the cultish *Dracula's Daughter*, one of the most ambiguous and sensual vampire films produced. Hillyer's serial style was well suited to the pseudo-science pulp fiction plot and he would later direct the first *Batman* serial for Columbia Pictures in 1943.

The script, by John Colton from a story by Howard Higgins and Douglas Hodges was obviously derived from the popular themes presented in the pulp magazines of the Thirties such as *Astounding* and *Startling*, and in many ways the feature is the forerunner of the Science Fiction cycle of the Fifties.

The *Invisible Ray* was also the first film to feature Boris Karloff in a role he would play many times — the mad scientist. In previous parts Karloff had been buried under pounds of greasepaint and collodion, but for *The Invisible Ray* he was fitted out with little more than a curly fright wig and moustache. His performance remains the central core of the film and his portrayal of Rukh as an initially dedicated/after-insane scientist

created a pattern that many others such as Lionel Atwill and John Carradine, would duplicate.

Universal were aware that The *Invisible Ray* was a unique film and shrouded the production in secrecy, closing the set to visitors during the filming of the more elaborate special effects scenes, thereby enhancing the potential box office.

The film was accorded A-feature status and production values and was graced with the super sharp black and white photography of George Robinson. The special effects photography was handled by one of Hollywood's masters, John P. Fulton, who had turned in such stunning work on the 1933 classic, *The Invisible Man*. Fulton's opening sequence showing ancient suns and stars exploding in the Nebula Andromeda, as seen through Rukh's telescope, is particularly memorable.

Right: Janos Rukh (*Boris Karloff*) and Dr Benet (*Bela Lugosi*) with Rukh's telescope.

Starburst sf classic

After their enormously successful Karloff/Lugosi vehicles, *The Black Cat* (1934) and *The Raven* (1935), Universal Pictures needed another movie in which to feature their star team. The result was *The Invisible Ray*, the first film to star Karloff in the role he would make famous — the Mad Scientist!

Seen today, the film holds up remarkably well, moreso than many of its contemporaries, though the romantic subplot involving Francis Drake and the wimpish Frank Lawton weakens the film, a fault which contemporary critics were quick to point out.

Bela Lugosi, though pitted squarely against King Karloff in the advertising, comes off as a secondary character and the actor was already showing signs of the fall from popularity (and good parts) that would so rapidly accelerate in the succeeding years.

The *Invisible Ray* proved a hit with fans and critics alike, the effects and photography garnering special praise along with Karloff's performance. Universal planned a follow-up, *The Man in the Cab*, to star the terrifying duo but the film was scrapped before production began. It was finally made in 1941 as *Man Made Monster* with Lon Chaney Jr and Lionel Atwill.



THE INVISIBLE





Feature by Phil Edwards

VISIBLE RAY



Above: Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff (out of character) relax on the set of *The Invisible Ray* between takes.

The Invisible Ray (1936)

Boris Karloff (as Janos Rukh), Bela Lugosi (*Dr Benet*), Francis Drake (*Diane Rukh*), Frank Lawton (*Ronald Drake*), with Beulah Bondi, Frank Reicher, Walter Kingsford, Nydia Westman, George Renavent, Violet Kemble Cooper.

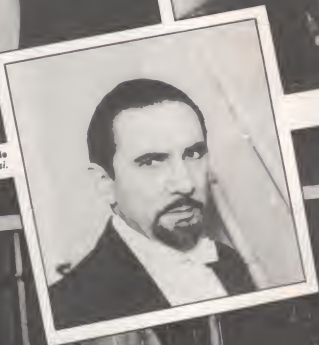
Directed by Lambert Hillyer. Screenplay by John Colton from a story by Howard Higgins and Douglas Hodges. Art Direction by Albert D'Agostino. Photographed by George Robinson. Special Effects by John P. Fulton. Edited by Bernard Burton. Music by Franz Waxman. Produced by Edmund Grainger. A Universal Picture.

Time: 82 mins

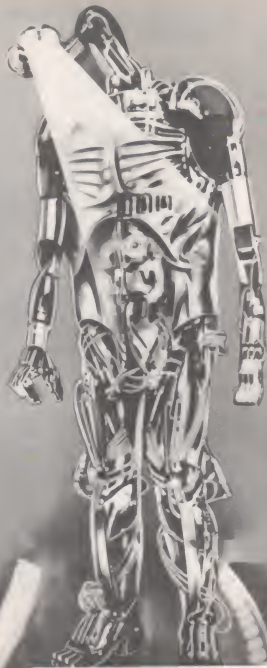
Left: Doctor Benet (Bela Lugosi) and Mrs Rukh question a maid who has had "a little fright".



This page: A selection of scenes from *The Invisible Ray* (1936) featuring Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi.



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thing
is
watching...
waiting...
and
wanting
on...



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TOP FANTASY FILMS

Last issue we looked at the top money-making films of all time in our *Top Fantasy Film Chart*. This month we take a look at how the films released (and re-released) in 1979 fared in their year in the cinemas. The chart was compiled by Starburst's resident data processor, Tony Crawley.

Superman, tying with *Moonraker* as the biggest money-maker in Britain last year, proves the runaway winner as box-office champion of 1979 in the annual *Variety* trade-paper survey. Supie's North American haul of 81-million dollars was slightly more than double that of *Alien*, which came in fourth in line, after Clint Eastwood's *Every Which Way But Loose* and Sly Stallone's *Rocky II*.



Above: Ridley Scott's *Alien* was the second biggest money-spinner of last year. Below: Doing well at number 21 in the listing was the Italian horror film, *Phantasm*.

Immediately behind Ridley Scott's triumph came *The Amityville Horror*, *Star Trek* and *Moonraker*... then nothing else of our particular ilk for a long while until George Hamilton's spoof *Dracula in Love At First Bite*, biting hold of 18th place with Ralph Bakshi's *Lord of the Rings* clinging to the 23rd spot, inches ahead of Richard Attenborough's *Magik*.

Naturally, the count is still going on for *Star Trek* and *The Black Hole* both of which opened there, as here, late in December. *Moonraker*, however, is now officially the most successful 007 film of all time and is still cleaning up around the world. Of this trio, we've not heard the last figures yet.

Biggest surprise of the '79 movies (and indeed, of the all-time champions' chart; see last issue) was the high placing achieved by Fred Walton's *When A Stranger Calls*. Stealthily but surely, *Stranger* became the one real sleeper of the year, closing just behind the *Star Wars* re-issue, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*,

Top left: *Top of the table* was Richard Donner's *Superman*. Top Right: *Star Trek* made it to number 5. Above: Bakshi's *Lord of the Rings* achieved a high position.

Dracula and *Prophecy*, as the very last of the 10-million-dollar-makers of the year.

This is very cheering news for Fred Walton — it's his first feature — and for the new Mel Simon Organisation, which also bankrolled Stan Dragoti's *Love At First Bite*, and therefore had a great opening year. Walton's movie is very much a son of Halloween. It tries to be Hitchcockian but is more (or to be frank, less than) Carpenterish, but works well as a ripe royal scare 'n' chiller number. Carol Kane plays the babysitter in the lonely, dark house of the night of the mass hunt for an escaped homicidal maniac (Britain's Tony Beckley). Charles Durning, a Brian De Palma regular, is the 'tec on Beckley's trail. Short on credibility, it's high on shocks and like the best of Carpenter, reminiscent of the B-movies of yore, and is due out way before the summer.





OF 1979

1.	Superman Director: Richard Donner	81-million
2.	Alien Ridley Scott	40,086,573
3.	The Amityville Horror Stuart Rosenberg	35-million
	Star Trek Robert Wise	
5.	Moonraker Lewis Gilbert	33,934,074
6.	The China Syndrome James Bridges	25,425,000
7.	Love At First Bite Stan Dragoti	18,100,000
8.	Lord of the Rings Ralph Bakshi	13,487,243
9.	Magic Richard Attenborough	13,081,000
10.	Buck Rogers in the 25th Century Daniel Haller	11,830,000
11.	Jaws re-issue Steven Spielberg	11,660,000
12.	Star Wars re-issue George Lucas	11,538,000
13.	Invasion of the Body Snatchers Philip Kaufman	11,056,000

Other items of fantasy-interest from the 1979 figures include the fact that Dan Heller's *Buck Rogers* in the 25th Century pulled in as much as 11,830,000 dollars — which is just 170,000 bucks better than the latest (last?) re-issue of Spielberg's *Jaws*. But *Jaws* did better this time around than *Star Wars*, though more people paid over good lucre to see the George Lucas treat (again?) than were bothered with *Body Snatchers*, *Dracula* or *Prophecy*. Wise people!

Re-issues, in fact, pull off some extraordinarily good business. The Exorcist surpassed Nicholas Meyer's *Time After Time* with ease, and even something like *Blazing Saddles* bettered *Airport '80 The Concorde*. That could mean we'll be spared too many sequels from now on. Or at least too many of the cheap, tawdry rip-off variety. Irwin Allen's miserable excuse of a movie, *Beyond The Poseidon Adventure*, for one stunning flop of an example, earned a paltry 2,100,000 dollars in more than six months' business. That won't pay for the publicity and advertising, much less turn a profit on the budget. A quickie tv sale might put *Poseidon II* into the black, but I doubt it. It's the biggest flopper of the year — and well deserved to be.

Even a series of midnight screenings in America and Canada last year of Jim Sharman's *Rocky Horror Picture Show* attracted more people and money than *Poseidon*. *Rocky Horror* also beat such big movies as *Time After Time*, Harrison Ford's *Frisco Kid* and *Meteor*. It makes you think. Let's hope it makes the film combines think as well. Give us what we want and we'll buy it, try to palm us off with rubbish and you've had it!

The full list of the fantasy films placings in the '79 box-office table is as follows: as usual double the figure for some indication of world returns.



Philip Kaufman's *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* reached number 13 in the Top Fantasy Film Chart of 1979.

14.	Dracula John Badham	10,526,000
15.	Prophecy John Frankenheimer	10,499,000
16.	When A Stranger Calls Fred Walton	10,100,000
17.	Monty Python's Life of Brian Terry Jones	9,500,000
18.	The Boys From Brazil Franklin J. Schaffner	7,973,000
19.	Airport '80 The Concorde David Lowell Rich	6,544,000
20.	Battlestar Galactica Richard A. Colla	6,264,000
21.	1941 Steven Spielberg	6-million
	Phantasm Don Coscarelli	
23.	The Exorcist re-issue William Friedkin	5,900,000
24.	The Rocky Horror Picture Show midnight screenings	5,188,000
	Jim Sharman	
25.	Time After Time Nicholas Meyer	5-million
26.	The Legacy Richard Marquand	4,727,000
27.	Hurricane Jan Troell	4,541,000
28.	The Spaceman and King Arthur Russ Mayberry	4,475,000
29.	Young Frankenstein re-issue Mel Brooks	4,297,000
30.	Meteor Ronald Neame	4,200,000
31.	Nightwing Arthur Hillier	3,750,000
32.	Late Great Planet Earth re-issue Robert Amram	3,483,000
33.	Star Crash Lewis Coats (Luigi Cozzi)	2,250,000
34.	Beyond The Poseidon Adventure Irwin Allen	2,100,000
35.	The Clonus Horror Robert Fiveson	1,680,000
36.	Message From Space Kinji Fukasaku	1,172,000

THE MAKING OF

STAR THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK WAR

Photos copyright 1980 Lucasfilm Ltd.

THOUGH IT HAS TAKEN THREE YEARS, THE SEQUEL TO THE PHENOMENALLY SUCCESSFUL MOVIE, *STAR WARS*, IS FINALLY WITH US. TONY CRAWLEY LOOKS AT THE MAKING OF THE FILM AND SOME OF THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE CREATIVE PEOPLE INVOLVED.

It's that time again. George Lucas science fantasy time! As *Star Trek* finally disappears inside Disney's Black Hole, the world's stage is set for the *Star Wars* sequel. Well, not the sequel... the continuation... the next chapter. Part Two! Well, no, not quite that either. Part Five, to be precise, in George's nine-part saga set in that distant galaxy far, far away.

In short: the world's most expensive and most successful movie serial is coming back. *The Empire Strikes Back* is

about to make its strike, folks.

Whatever George likes to call it, however he likes to number it, it is for all intents and purposes, a sequel, and probably the world's most eagerly awaited sequel since *Godfather II*. And as *Godpop II*, as it's more familiarly known, is just about the only sequel film to have improved upon its forerunner, there's a lot riding on the new Lucasfilm production. Not least, George's reputation as the maker of the world's most successful movie... which has been earning as much as 140,000 dollars a day.





Above: One of Ralph McQuarrie's pre-production paintings. Below: The assassin Boba Fett.

Since *Star Wars* came out way back in 1977, it has been milked, ravaged, dissected, re-directed and thoroughly ripped-off from Italy to Canada. There have been so many badly-made, horrendously-conceived, quickie copy-cat movies, that even the most devout sf movie fan has become a little tired of all those clones of Luke, Leia, Han, Darth Vader and the robots running and spinning around in a flurry of movies, most of which seemed to have cost about 56½p or the producer's son's pocket-money — which ever was the cheapest. Their scripts were lamentable and the special-effects diabolical. This sick succession of cash-in movies have but killed the good name of science fiction, or if you prefer, science-fantasy, in the cinema.

George Lucas, therefore, has a lot to answer for . . . and a lot to make up for. He has nothing to beat, of course. But he has had to work damned hard to make sure he retains our interest.

So what chances does *Empire* have of making any impact on our jaded palates?

Quite a lot, as it happens . . . or as we fervently hope it happens. If only because of the way that George Lucas and his production partner, Gary Kurtz, go about making movies. *Star Wars* has made them not only millionaires (and then

some), but film-makers with the greatest degree of independence in Hollywood, or indeed the entire film world, since the days when Chaplin, Pickford and Griffith first set up their own shop, United Artists.

As I write all this, however, *The Empire Strikes Back* is still shrouded in almost total secrecy. I know a little of what went on behind the scenes since shooting began in Norway on March 5, 1979, but George 'n' Gary have most of their secrets well under wraps until opening night in America — and the European premiere at the Odeon, Leicester Square (farewell, *Black Hole*!) on Wednesday, May 21.

So at this juncture, I cannot exactly report if they've worked the oracle a second time, if they've lived up to their — and indeed our — high expectations. We can only report what's been going on . . . and why . . . as we await the outcome.

George Lucas, after all, is in the position of someone like Dr Christian Barnard after he performed the world's first heart-transplant operation. What does he do for an encore? Barnard, as it happened, did not do a great deal — everyone else did instead. For the last few years, it looked as if the same thing was happening to Lucas — except the *Star Wars* transplants proved so ineffectual.



Hence our anticipation of his new operation!

The initial problem with the new movie is not the story, not the effects — which are bound to be even more super-polished this time, because of the extra money available, and indeed because of George's own in-house effects work via one of his new companies, Industrial Light and Magic.

No, the *numero uno* problem with the new flick is the cast. Obviously, all the favourites are back in line — Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker, Carrie Fisher as Princess Leia, Harrison Ford as Han Solo,

Naturally, we all want to see these guys back in action again. But we have already . . . in so many other sf movies of late. Of course, the originals have to be better than the cheapjack clones — or should be. For *Star Wars*, George Lucas chose an ensemble cast; the main trio of Hamill, Fisher and Ford had to gel together as a unit, or he would have selected another threesome entirely. Last time, his screen newcomers were in unknown territory. George directed and he alone knew where and how he wanted them to go.

But it's obvious that he cannot merely



Dave Prowse inside Darth Vader's breathing mask, Kenny Baker and Anthony Daniels locked into the metallic overalls of R2-D2 and C-3PO, Peter Mayhew all furred up anew as Chewbacca, and yes, even Sir Alec Guinness' Obi-Wan (Ben) Kenobi in a special reprise stanza.

That is both good and bad news.

rely on the same crew of characters. New creations have to be brought in. Billy Dee Williams, in the main, as Baron Lando Calrissian, "the charismatic boss" (it says here) of a mining colony in space, and an old buddy of Han Solo. Fine. A black man in space is hardly new, but rarely touched upon either . . .

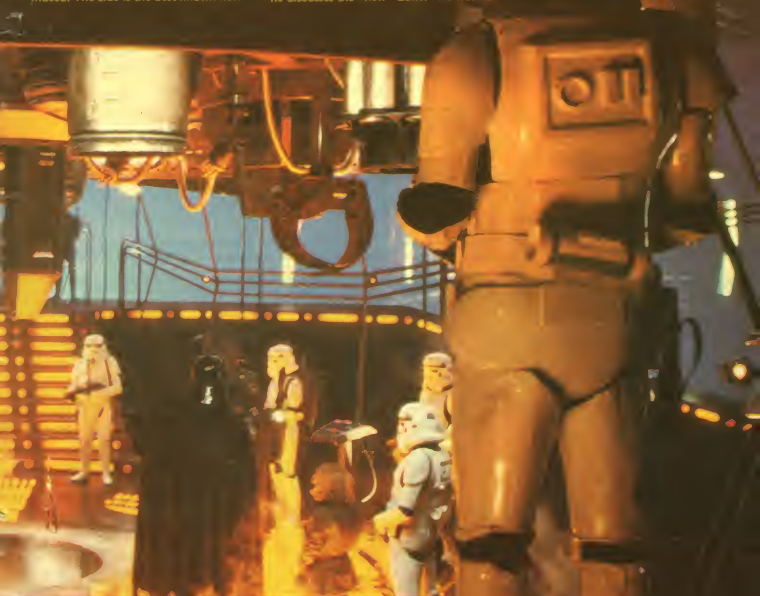
But since 1977, *Star Wars* has become

more than a movie. It is a multi-million-dollar business corporation. And so, merchandising requires new characters. The toy manufacturers cannot keep churning out R2 and 3PO toys from here until doomsday. And so, enter a cuddly, friendly, eight-foot high beastie call a Tauntaun — you say, town-town. It's no vast rival of Chewie, you ride this beast like a camel. Or you do on the frozen planet of Hoth.

There is also another very special new creation, around which the shrouds of secrecy still hang heavy. Very heavy indeed. The clue is the best known new

the old, who are changing format rather than face. Carrie Fisher, for example, is turning into a kind of John Ford Western heroine (the way Luke Skywalker was a Fordian youth last time). "She's now torn between two men," explains producer Gary Kurtz. The men are Luke and Han, of course. "She will be more positive and less passive," adds Gary. Unfortunately, he didn't say that to me, otherwise I would have asked what on earth he was talking about. Leia was hardly ever passive in the first film...

Kurtz sounds more on the ball when he discusses the "new" Luke. "He was



name on the Empire poster. Frank Oz. He's Jim Henson's partner on *The Muppet Show*, responsible for, among others, Fozzie Bear, Animal, Sam the Eagle and, of course, Miss Piggy. Now he has come up with a new character for George. He created, designed, activated and acted... Yoda.

The new characters will mix in with

naive — now he is growing up and learning how to use The Force. The nucleus of the whole saga is his mental and spiritual training. He is the prime user of The Force but he still is not ready to take over entirely from Ben Kenobi. Well, of course not. He has at least four more chapters to go if George manages to make his entire serial...

According to Kurtz, Harrison Ford has a problem, too. Or rather, Han Solo has . . . Oh, I don't know, the way Kurtz articulates it, it sounds as much Ford's problem as Solo's. "It's one of decision," says Gary. "Does he want to take part in this new organisation that is growing up against the Galactic Empire -- or does he want to go off and fight as a freelance?" Or put it another way: does Ford want to stay with the series, the new organisation that is growing up against the *Hollywood* empire, or does he want to go off making as many films as he can, as indeed he has since 1977 . . . ?

On the subject of the film itself, Kurtz has this to say: "We feel that now we have familiarised audiences with the basic environment, we can introduce even more imaginative extensions of it, while at the same time bringing some emphasis to heightened emotional relationships between the characters."

Very American is Gary Kurtz. I think he means that Han Solo gets to kiss Princess Leia . . .

The new director, as by now I'm sure we all know, is Irvin Kershner, making his first sf film at age 57. "I happen to love science fiction," he says, "and I've been reading it since I was a

kid. Perhaps hindsight will place *Star Wars* into perspective, but this is certainly true -- it appealed to the child in us all."

George Lucas wrote the story for the new film. Leigh Brackett, a prolific and talented screenwriter and science-fiction novelist, completed the first draft of the script just before her tragic death in March, 1978. Brought in for the final polish was Lawrence Kasdan, now a firm member of the Lucasfilm set-up. His

"Now we have familiarised the audience with the basic environment, we can introduce even more imaginative extensions of it, while at the same time bringing some more emphasis to heightened emotional relationships between the characters."
— Gary Kurtz, producer.

original script, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, is about to start shooting at George's old hunting-ground, Elstree studios, with Steven Spielberg directing. Spielberg will also direct Larry's next script, *Continental Divide*.

Just as many of the first cast were brought back for the new adventure, so were various key specialists behind the scenes. Robert Watts became associate producer, Norman Reynolds, art director

last time, takes charge of production design. Paul Hirsch, from *De Palma's Obsession* and *The Fury*, remains the film's editor, Stuart Freeborn is make-up supervisor, and handles all "special creature design." John Mollo designed the costumes and John Williams, naturally, penned the new score. Williams, Reynolds and Mollo were among the seven Oscar winners on *Star Wars*, by the way.

New to the team were Ken Russell's favourite camera ace, Peter Suschitzky, and Brian Johnson, replaced John Dykstra -- the *Battlestar Galactica* rip-off merchant -- as supervisor of the mechanical special effects at Elstree. Once shooting was over, Brian, who has worked on everything good in sf from 2001 to *Alien*, joined up with Richard Edlund and Dennis Muren, for the creation of the post-production effects at George's Industrial Light and Magic facility.

Brian's bunch have all been toiling like mad for the past year in California, working on the miniatures and opticals ("the buck stops at opticals," says George), plus various stop-motion and animation sequences for animals and other mechanical creatures. Their work will, so I hear, somewhat bury the achievements to date of the great Ray Harryhausen.

One of the key sequences Brian and his team have been concerned with for

*An intriguing pre-production design painting by *Star Wars* regular, Ralph McQuarrie.*



some months is an exceptionally complex scene of the Millennium Falcon flying through an asteroid belt, while pursued by Imperial TIE Fighters . . .

Special white matting instead of black was required for scenes showing the rebel combat craft — light-grey in colour — manoeuvring against a snowy background. Not easy! White or near-white against white is to say the least of it, technically difficult to achieve. Some say it's downright impossible. But that is not a word in the George Lucas lingo. And so after the usual lengthy period of experiment, research and development, Brian's boys pulled off this staggering trick.

You'll begin to understand the statement about Lucas not understanding the word "impossible" once you hear about the shooting in London. Again, none of it was simple. But then, no one ever said it had to be easy . . .

To actually accommodate the movie at Elstree Studios, where George made *Star Wars* — where Kubrick made both *2001* and *The Shining* — all eight sound-stages on the lot had to be used. And that was not enough . . . George required a really big, but *huge* stage, something on a par with Pinewood's 007 stage, for example. He couldn't hire that, *Superman* had beaten him to it. And so, he simply went ahead and built the additional facility . . . one of the largest sound-stages



Above: The screen's most popular robots, the Laurel and Hardy team of C-3PO (Anthony Daniels) and R2-D2 (Kenny Baker), return to face the might of the Galactic Empire.



Photos copyright 1980 Lucasfilm Ltd.

Left: The sinister figure of Darth Vader, Dark Lord of the Sith (Dave Prowse), looms over the body of a fallen Imperial lackey.

THE STORY

With the Grand Moff Tarkin gone, Darth Vader casts his tyrannical shadow over the might of the Galactic Empire. Princess Leia's rebel alliance is herd pressed, and takes refuge on the ice-bound planet of Hoth. From their ice-cavern base, Luke Skywalker and Han Solo range the snow capes for an explanation to these enigmatic, alien wastas.

Vader's mighty squadrons locate the rebels and zoom in for a punitive assault. Understrength and outnumbered, the rebels are in disarray. Some escape . . . Luke and R2-D2 are guided to a remote jungle planet, to seek Yoda, the 800-year-old Jedi Master who taught Luke's fether and Ben Kenobi the mysteries of The Force.

Han and Chewbacca manage to get the Princess and C-3PO away in the Millennium Falcon, hiding first in an asteroid crater, and then the gaseous Bespin planet, where Han's buddy, the self-styled Baron Lando Calrissian should aid them. There is, though, a price on Han's head. He is captured by bounty hunters like the inscrutable Boba Fett.

Fearing their Bespin sanctuary may prove a trap, Luke forgoes his quest for Force knowledge to aid them . . . and steps into a bitter confrontation with a foe he's clearly no match for — Darth Vader!

THE NEW DIRECTOR

Peter Mayhew's Chewie takes his orders from a new man in charge of the Star Wars saga — Irvin Kershner, 57, whose reel fame goes back to *Stakeout on Dope Street*, which he made for Roger Corman in 1958. Kersh's more recent films include Sean Connery's *A Fine Madness* (1966), George C. Scott as *The Firm* (1967), George Segal in *Loving* (1970) — which also featured in a small role, one Sherry Lansing, now the first woman to be made vice-president in charge of production at 20th Century-Fox — Barbara Streisand's *Up In The Sandbox* (1972), Elliott Gould's *S.P.Y.S.* (1974), Richard Harris in *A Man Called Horse* (1976), Bronson's *Raid on Entebbe* (1977) and Faye Dunaway's *The Eyes of Laura Mars* (1978).

A witty, sagacious man with an urbane view of life, and a life-long interest in science fiction, Kersh says of the Star Wars saga: "If you've ever watched a storyteller, as I have, in an Iranian or a Syrian village, sitting in a square telling a story, as they begin to recount a story that has action they become breathless, their voices grow more excited . . . Well, these are films of life and death, dealing with heroes, and people of great power — films of great urgency, action films!"



The Empire Builders

The team behind the most awaited sequel of this or any other year. Left to right: Director Irvin Kershner, producer Gary Kurtz, executive producer and, of course, the man behind the story and the entire Star Wars saga, George Lucas, and the co-screenwriter, Lawrence Kasdan. George is now producing Larry's script of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* at Elstree, with Steve Spielberg directing — and that, too, is said to be the start of another multi-chapter saga. Just four in all, as opposed to the proposed nine Star Wars films.

Photos copyright 1980 Lucasfilm Ltd.



in the world, and another important plus for the British film industry, which if it doesn't make that many films any more, at least is reputed to be the best service industry to the rest of the world's film-makers.

Foundations for the new stage began during the rotten winter of '78/79. That didn't help any with speed. The winter was so bad, Irvin Kershner could almost have shot the Hoth sequence here instead of bothering with Robert Scott's old stamping ground in Finse, Norway. (It was even worse when they did go to Finse — where the '78/79 winter was the worst in living memory).

But even with British builders in charge, the new stage was finished. Eventually. And then it was, ironically, used for some icy Hoth planet sequences, as

Soundstage.

Fortunately, in some respects, shooting began in Norway, 5,000 ft above sea level at Finse, on the rail link between Oslo and the port of Bergen. Preparations had been going on there for months before Irvin Kershner first yelled *Action* on March 5, 1979. High above the remote mountain pass, "well above the vegetation line," says Kurtz, is a glacier sheathed in a veil of blue ice — the site for the battle for dominance on the Hoth planet.

For a week or more, some seventy technicians and actors lived in a ski lodge at Finse, cut off by avalanches that literally shut down the railway line and severed all connections with the outside world. An arctic survival camp, built to headquarter the crew at the glacier's

Now Kubrick was trapped as well. The loss of Stage 3 meant he had to rebuild his set on another stage. And so Empire had the Norway footage in the (frozen) can, but had lost two stages at Elstree. Not a good way to start any movie. And Empire, of course, was not just any film.

Within days of the unit's return from Finse, the schedule was in ruins. First the fire, then the severity of shooting conditions in Norway, had made nonsense of the great plans of producer Kurtz. The film was under-scheduled and time needed to be gained. But fast.

By March 12, the first unit was back at Elstree and shooting interiors of those sets they had ready. A second unit was required to speed things up



well as for Luke's adventures in the jungle planet. In all, this new Star Wars stage has a capacity in excess of 1,250,000 cubic feet. It measures 250 ft long by 122 ft wide and it's 45 ft high.

Even then, it wasn't quite big enough... The largest of the interior sets required a further 30ft extension to it!

Big, Empire obviously is then... You need more evidence? Well, take the construction of the full-sized Millennium Falcon. Yes, full-size...

This was built by a maritime engineering firm at Pembroke Docks, in Wales. They put the Falcon together in a hanger originally used to build the giant Sunderland flying boats of the '30s. When it was finished, the space craft weighed more than 40 tons. It had to be divided into sixteen inter-locking sections — rather like a toy version, built with a King Kong in mind — before it could be transported by convoy the 250 miles from Wales to Elstree.

Once at the studio, it was reassembled, fitted with compressed air pads (akin to those on hovercraft) and simply floated into position on the gigantic Star Wars



summit, was buried and the film-makers experienced white-outs in which blizzards whipped into a blinding powder.

Nobody gave up, though. Repeated efforts were made to shoot at the summit and eventually the second-unit crew, directed by Peter MacDonald, got the shots as per script.

But why, I hear you cry, do I say all this frozen-stiff Norwegian shooting was fortunate... That, oh my brethren, was because of the fire...

Stanley Kubrick was still utilising Stage 3 at Elstree for the completion of *The Shining*. During the night of January 24, Stage 3 disappeared. Guttered in a flash fire... Little wonder that so many Hollywood folk scorn cigarettes these days.

The studio's cluttered driveways prevented the local fire brigade's equipment from getting in close to the blaze, and come the morning Stage 3 was no more.

Kurtz, Kershner and Co had, of course, been waiting for Kubrick to finish up, so they could move in on Stage 3 on their return from Norway, dress up the stage and get to work on the interiors.



— two units shooting at once on different stages, in fact.

For a moment or two, Kurtz was in luck — because John Barry was not...

John, the Oscar-winning production designer of *Star Wars* (and *Superman*) was not on the Lucasfilm strength this time. He was across town in Shepperton directing his own first movie, *Saturn 3*. Or he was for a while. There came to be disagreements about how John was shooting his own story, and he left the film, and was replaced by his producer, Stanley Donen.

And so, John Barry came back into the fold — the perfect man to head-up the second unit for Empire at Elstree — as director. Then, the most tragic blow of all. Two weeks after starting work, John Barry was taken ill with a mystery ailment and died. And it is some measure of the Lucas team's feelings for Barry, that despite still being woefully behind schedule, Gary Kurtz shut down production for the afternoon of the funeral...

Gary Kurtz next took over directing the second-unit action himself, until a replacement for John Barry could be



located. He found the ideal man in Harley Cokliss, director of the rather less than successful *That Summer* movie, and still awaiting the go-ahead on the *Thongor* movie.

Amid all these ups and downs, Gary Kurtz remained optimistic. "Compared to some films of similar size," he said, "the problems were minor and the enterprise pressed on. The redeeming factor, of course, was the quality of the footage, which made the struggle to film the complex interiors all the more worthwhile."

Almost straight from the start, *Empire* was being made on two levels — and in two countries. At Elstree studios in London and at the Industrial Light and Magic facility in California. Between them Lucas and Kurtz kept tabs on both dimensions, making sure everything remained accurately interconnected. George flew in from America from time to time (and always in secrecy). He would join Paul Hirsch in his editing suite, as Kurtz brought Lucas up to date on the day by day happenings and footage.

The London action went on until September, on four mammoth sets in particular. "Of these," says Kurtz, "the cool,

beautiful, streamlined interiors of the Cloud City of Bespin were the easier to work on."

The huge ice hanger on the Hoth planet — the first set on the *Star Wars* Stage — dwarfed cast and crew, with a massive array of full-scale hardware, and was replete with vistas of solid ice. Once Irvin Kershner had finished work with Hoth, the ice hanger disappeared almost overnight, and the 1,250,000 cubic feet of stage was turned into the swampy planet of Bagobah — full of twisted trees, fetid lakes, misty humidity, and about as uncomfortable to work in as any real-life tropical jungle environment.

More taxing still, however, was the fourth biggie — the carbon-freezing chamber of the Cloud City. This required a 40 ft high cylinder within a complex of spiralling metal, packed with gadgetry of every description, much of which emitted steam. "This set," remarked Kurtz, "had no redeeming factor for the cast or crew... except for its impressive impact on the screen!"

Come September, the Elstree photography was complete, all the intricate props, Oscar-winning costumes, and enormous hardware was tucked away into

storage until the next time. But as with any science-fantasy movie, that is only half of the shooting story. Work, and I do mean *work*, now switched in earnest to the effects labs at Industrial Light and Magic, where the miniatures, opticals, animation and varying other processes had to be meticulously integrated with Irvin Kershner's live-action footage.

Ben Burtt, the Oscar-winning sound effects supervisor from *Star Wars*, had been hard at toil for a full year or more, as well, creating special sounds for the adventures on Hoth and the gaseous planet of Bespin.

As I write, I'm told that all this post-production work is "proceeding to schedule". All the dialogue replacement and voice looping has been completed. John Williams, who took two months to write 108 minutes of original music for the new film, has recorded this score at the Anvil Recording Group's studios at Denham. John also conducted the LSO, and in addition to four fresh themes for the new film, he is reprising three of the main themes from his Oscar-winning *Star Wars* score.

In Hollywood now, the final mix of



Above: No, we didn't get the picture the wrong way up! But if you want to find out just why Luke Skywalker finds himself in this situation you'll have to wait till the film opens.



music, special effects and dialogue is afoot, as the clock ticks away to zero hour — the world charity premiere in Washington on May 17, and the European royal charity premiere in London, before Princess Margaret on May 21. From Thursday, May 22, *The Empire Strikes Back* is yours — in 70mm and Dolby stereo sound at the Odeon, Leicester Square. By June, the film will reach key British cities. The holiday-maker-packed seaside towns get it in July and the film has a national general release throughout August.

I don't know about you, but I can't wait.

Between them George Lucas and Gary Kurtz, Irvin Kershner and Brian Johnson, Richard Edlund and Dennis Muren, not to mention Hamill, Fisher, Ford, Daniels, Baker, Prowse, Billy Dee Williams and Sir Alec are promising a lot. And I have a feeling it's a promise they'll keep.

If not, this could be the end of the *Star Wars* series.

And George Lucas, for one, is not wanting to stop it just here. He has, as I say, a nine-part saga up his sleeve, spanning forty years in space. Nine

chapters — three trilogies — and *Star Wars* and *The Empire Strikes Back* are merely the first two parts of the middle trilogy section.

"In choosing the episode to be filmed first," says George, "I chose the chapter I felt the most secure with, and which I liked the most!"

The result was *Star Wars: Episode IV — A New Hope*. The episode number and subtitle were dropped due to their length and the confusion they might have caused — "but they will appear on all new prints of *Star Wars*," insists Lucas.

Originally, George had compiled about a dozen galactic tales. He went for Part Four to start with, because he quite obviously dug the characters the most — Luke and Han and the Princess and Old Ben and Darth Vader and the Grand Moff Tarkin and C-3PO and R2-D2 and

Chewbacca. Rather than go back to one of the earlier time-scale stories, which would necessarily cut out many of these characters, he decided it best to move on and make Part Five second.

The third film, however, could prove to be Part One, Part Two, Part Three or indeed Part Eight . . . as he decides which character or characters to rest awhile; or indeed in the case of a star like Harrison Ford, whether a character decides he wants to rest, or to be written out. Whether or not Sir Alec Guinness or Peter Cushing might return soon to play earlier versions of their roles, is up to them.

In the end, though, this is George Lucas' jig-saw. And he can move it any which way he wants, piece by piece — which piece and in whatever order satisfies him.

And, hopefully, us.

At the risk of sounding like a Glaswegian, Baron Munchhausen is pure magic. A film which dates from the beginning of the Space Age, but one which has not dated because it is a pure fantasy.

The *Sunday Telegraph* called Baron Munchhausen "a deliciously quirky fantasy". The *Observer* called it "a ravishing fairy tale with some good anti-romantic jokes, full of tricks and magic". Even the *Daily Worker*, not normally known for its love of whimsy, said, "This is a film to satisfy everyone — from analytical egg-heads to belligerent little boys". And, for once, even the press release was a fair reflection of the film. Its rather ineffective British distributor The Short Film Service wrote: "Imagine a film that takes its heroes from the surface of the moon to the bottom of the sea, from the palace of Sultan of Constantinople to the stomach of a giant whale. Imagine Fairbanks at his nimblest directed by Melies at his most magic." All in 81 minutes. That is Baron Munchhausen, the part-animated, part-live-action, wholly fantastic story of the world's greatest liar.

The passing mention of film pioneer George Melies was no idle reference. In 1937, Melies and Hans Richter had planned to film *The Adventures of Baron Munchhausen*, based on the book by 18th century German poet Gottfried A. Burger. That project fell through, but in 1943 Josef von Baky made *Munchhausen*,

A STARBURST FA

In 1961 Czech director Karl Zeman completed a film which would later be described as a series of animated Victorian prints. The movie was based on the work of 18th-Century German poet Gottfried A. Burger, though

Baron Munchhausen

a highly-praised German movie of the Baron's mythical adventures. And in 1961 came *Baron Munchhausen* by 50 year-old Czech director Karel Zeman.

After an imagination-boggling opening, the first manned rocket arrives on the moon (this is 1961 don't forget). Cosmonaut Tonik steps onto the lunar surface and finds footprints. He discovers he has been beaten to the moon by more than one person. Jules Verne's rocket to the moon is already there. Then there is a shout. It's Cyrano de Bergerac in costume with a feathered hat and wearing no

spacesuit. He introduces the cosmonaut to three men in business suits and top hats: Jules Verne's original voyagers to the moon. Also there on the lunar surface — but of course — Baron Munchhausen. The fantasists and liars of the world got to the moon well before modern science ever made the journey.

For a long time before *Baron Munchhausen* was made, director Karel Zeman had been collecting material for "a kind of fantasy about the discovery of the new worlds". But, before he could assemble all this fantastic material into a script, he

Below: Cyrano de Bergerac introduces Cosmonaut Tonik to Jules Verne's three original voyagers to the moon. Right: The Baron and his friends are swallowed by a giant fish and find in its belly a graveyard of lost ships.



NTASY EXTRA

Zeman was heavily influenced by the work of illustrator Gustave Dore. In fact Dore had illustrated a book about the same character called *Narrative of His Marvellous Travels and Campaigns in Russia*.

unchhausen

Feature by John Fleming

was overtaken by prosaic reality. The first sputnik was launched; space science advanced in leaps and bounds; documentary films were made which gave a realistic view of the moon, a scientific explanation of spaceflight, a bland, unimaginative view of the world waiting "out there". Almost as a reaction against this, he turned to the world's greatest liar.

Interviewed just before shooting started on *Baron Munchhausen* Zeman explained: "Man now stands firmly on the threshold of the Space Age. It occurred to me that whoever in history

dreamed out loud even a fraction of the scientific wonders we take for granted would have been branded, at the very least, a fantasist, a liar — in fact, a Baron Munchhausen. This gave me the idea."

And so Baron Munchhausen is an out-and-out fantasy. The Baron mistakes the cosmonaut for a moon man, a selenite, and decides to show this "stranger" the wonders of the 'real' world down on Earth. So they literally set sail in a galleon pulled by white horses on a trip through space that takes them past witches on broomsticks and other mani-

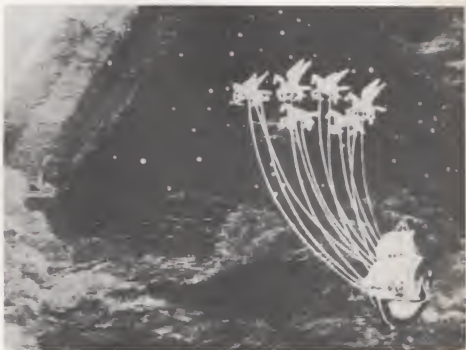
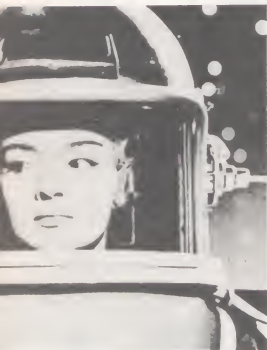
festations of the real world down on Earth.

They arrive in Constantinople in time to rescue a Venetian princess held captive by the Sultan. The Baron makes good their escape by bravely killing 10,000 bashi-bazoukas and destroying the entire Turkish fleet in a brilliant military deception. Such things happen every day. Other adventures in the Baron's world include a horseback ride to the bottom of the sea; being carried off in the claws of a giant bird; making a reconnaissance of a battlefield by riding on a cannonball; and turning a turreted, fairytale castle into a rocket launchpad for lunar travel.

The bizarre thing about the film (well, one of the bizarre things) is the visual technique in which live actors are used in real, animated and ornately-drawn settings. When Baron Munchhausen was shown at the London Film Festival, the *Daily Herald* thought the film's backgrounds were "like a series of animated Victorian prints". In fact, the settings were inspired by the prints of artist Gustave Dore (whose work was also an inspiration for the makers of the 1933 *King Kong*). Dore had illustrated the 1862 version of Baron Munchhausen's *Narrative of His Marvellous Travels and Campaigns in Russia*. And he was also famed for his illustrations of the work of Jules Verne. Karel Zeman was a long-time Verne fan. In 1956, he had filmed the Verne-inspired *An Invention for Destruc-*



Right: Baron Munchhausen. Below Left: At the climax of the film the Venetian princess, Bianca, turns into a modern cosmonaut carrying roses — "because the moon has always belonged to lovers and dreamers." Below right: The Baron and his "selenite" friend return to Earth in this strange space ship. Bottom: The giant fish which swallowed the Baron and his friends was actually achieved by using a split screen technique. The model fish was floated in real water with a drawn background.



tion and he intended to make a series of Verne movies, including *Captain Nemo, Into the Bowels of the Earth* and *A Two Years' Holiday*. The plans came to nothing, but Baron Munchhausen retains traces of Verne-type fantasy.

Another influence is the silent cinema — an influence seen mainly in the large number of incidental visual gags — the Baron getting his boot stuck in the window-pane or trying to push and pull open a door only to have the princess (whom he is trying to impress) show him it is a sliding door. Zeman admits to a weakness for silent movies and an

admiration of Chaplin because in those early movies "everything was simple, but it was full of ideas, action, wit and humour. That is why (says Zeman) I am constantly attempting to make a kind of artistic, visual comedy, to recapture the outstanding qualities of silent films . . . I have never used the trick technique in a cheaply bravura manner, but only within the demands of the story. And, up to now, I have not found a satisfactory artistic standpoint even for Bradbury".

Zeman does succeed in creating a literally fantastic film in *Baron Munchhausen*. Like America's George Pal, he made his reputation as a director of short puppet and trick effects films. He first combined live-action and animation in 1955 with his *Journey into Primeval Times*. The technique reached its peak with *Baron Munchhausen* and then, inexplicably lapsed into tedium with his *Jester's Tale* in 1964.

But look out for Baron Munchhausen, which lived and lives up to Zeman's intention: "A celebration of the inventiveness and creative power of man".

It's magic. ●

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by a strange civilization.**



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Shivers (1974), Rabid (1977), The Brood (1980) and the lesser-known Crimes of the Future (1970) and Stereo (1969) are five recent contemporary horror films from a young Canadian writer/director, David Cronenberg. His films have a definite scientific slant — the horror arises out of "science gone wrong".

His first film, Stereo, was made for 5,000 dollars. The film is set in a Canadian institute where parapsychologist Luther Stringfellow operates on six young adults, removing their power of speech. Then by neurosurgery, he increases their telepathic abilities.

The theme was continued, in part, in his next film, Crimes of the Future. Set in another Canadian institute, the movie concerns the treatment of patients with "severely pathological" skin diseases caused by modern cosmetics. All women die before puberty with "Rouge's Malady".

Shivers concerns an experiment to replace the human kidneys with a parasite. The result is that the experiment gets out of hand and those infected become rampaging lunatics.

Rabid tells the story of a girl (played by Marilyn Chambers) who is involved in a road accident and is operated on by

well meaning doctors who implant a strange device in her body. The device has a will of its own and starts to remove blood from handy bystanders, with the result that the victims become raving, dangerous maniacs — rather like the characters that people Shivers.

Phil Edwards interviewed David Cronenberg in London earlier this year.

Below: Canadian director David Cronenberg. Opposite: Two grisly scenes from Cronenberg's earlier film, Shivers (1974) about an insanity-inducing parasite loose on a high rise apartment block.



THE CRONENBERG TAPES

The Starburst Interview

David Cronenberg was late for the interview. I sat in the plush lobby of the Ritz Hotel trying to prepare myself for a chat with Canada's King of Fantasy. It wasn't easy. I was about to meet the man who has probably given more unhealthy nightmares to people than any other director working in the world of horror cinema. An opinion of Cronenberg, based on his films, gives the impression that this is a man who is definitely strange — who has, it would seem, a bizarre preoccupation with physical bodily corruption. When Cronenberg arrived however, I was completely thrown off balance . . .

Starburst: Where did the idea for *The Brood* originate? I got the impression you might have had a bad experience at EST.
Cronenberg: I had a bad marriage actually, or that's part of it. In one sense *The Brood* is very autobiographical, a nightmare version of something that was real. That's one reason I feel very close to the film, although it's all filtered through the sensibility of the screen.

*I liked the structure of *The Brood*, the way the various elements drew together about half way through. The level of*



physical horror is very apparent in both *Shivers* and *Rabid*, yet in *The Brood*, though that horror is there, it's really secondary to the story.

You're right. It really is a film about characters. Fewer characters than the other films and their actions would mean more and you would care about them. *Rabid* was more an action film with lots of characters, who didn't mean much to the audience, getting knocked off. The *Brood* was meant to be more psychologically "thick" and the physical horror had to mean something to the audience. To do that the story had to be very well developed.

How did you get on with Oliver Reed? He does have a certain reputation.

He was great. I'd expected all kinds of things, he has a reputation for being a wild man, but he's totally professional, very well prepared when he comes on the set and a delight to work with. I had written that part for an American and when Oliver was suggested I had to kind of switch my head around and see whether it was essential that the part had to have an American or not. He really made the role his own and he loved the script, which of course helped a lot.

How did Samantha Eggar respond to the rather nasty scenes she had to do?



Well, she really got into it. I think she found it very cathartic to do. I knew I would have to find a very special actress to play that role because it's a very odd role to play. She's immobile and you don't have the usual "crutches" in the dialogue scenes, like people getting up and having a drink and walking to the window, etc. An awful lot depended on her, so it was quite a challenge, that part of it. She said that the film reminded her of her childhood and that was one of the reasons why she wanted to do it. There were some scenes that were more explicit that I cut out. Close-ups of her licking the baby I just left them in long-shot.

Why did you take them out?

Censorship problems in North America. I would have liked to have left them in. I didn't have any censorship problems here in the American R-rated version.

The scene that disturbed me and made me think you might have problems was the murder of the school teacher in front of the children. Were the kids on the set for that sequence?

They were there. It was a very interesting experience. I'd talked to them all and discussed it a lot but we still lost two or three who just broke down and cried when we shot it. They were shocked at first, but they really got fascinated with the two midget actors who played the killers. They started to cry when we did the first master shots...

Did that personally disturb you?

Not really. I have an eight year old daughter and I know that when we play and I'm a monster and she's chasing me or something, there's a moment, and it's quite delicious, when there's a fear but it's a safe fear. In a way, it's what anybody experiences in a horror film. The kids on *The Brood* actually got to talking to the cameraman and everybody on the set and after a couple of days, started to understand the film-making process. By the end of the scene I felt justified anyway because I couldn't get shots of any of the kids crying, because they were chanting "We want blood". They'd discovered that the "blood" was a mix-





Opposite: Two scenes from Cronenberg's second major film, *Rabid* (1977). This page: A group of scenes from Cronenberg's latest science horror offering *The Brood* (1980).



ture of corn syrup and colouring and they'd started to eat it! On the whole it proved quite a fascinating experience for them. I will say though, that the final scene of the teacher covered in blood was shot without the children being there. *Your films have had progressively bigger budgets...*

My new film, *Scanners*, has a four million dollar budget, which isn't a big budget, but isn't a small budget either. You do get to a point where the budget doesn't really matter and you still have problems. There's always something that you want that you can't get. You'd always like

more time either in preparation, shooting or post production or something. Even people who work on a thirty million dollar budget have the same problems.

Steven Spielberg is a good example.

In a way the problems all come down to the same thing — to make a good film. A film that works and to find the right cast. Money doesn't guarantee you the proper cast.

Did you have any trouble getting Barbara Steele for Shivers?

No. Well, yes a little... I had to kind of cajole her into taking the part. Of the films I've done I think she was the only

actor who wasn't happy with her experience on one of my films. She was only in it for two or three days, but she was having some problems at the time.

The bath scene in Shivers is now quite famous among Steele aficionados.

Well, she insisted on wearing a body stocking for that. She was worried I was going to photograph her in the nude.

Something that plays a large part in your films is special effects, or make up special effects. Is that an area you are interested in?

Well, the scripts I write are very specific on what happens, special effects wise. I get a special effects man involved at a very early stage and we discuss how we might achieve the required effects in terms of cutting or how much we want to show in one shot and so on. It's a very methodical process. A lot depends on who you get, pre-production time allowed and it also depends on luck.

Were you happy with the effects in The Brood?

Not entirely. I didn't like the creatures' faces.

Too mask-like?

Yes. I had to cut around them a lot. A lot of the cutting I did there was because of that, though this is not unusual in special effects scenes. I just thought they could have been better. The corpse of the creature on the table could have been better, too.

The script for The Brood is very bleak. It certainly triggered off a variety of responses in me.

Well, that's what it's supposed to be cathartic. *The Brood* is very bleak and unlike *Shivers* and *Rabid* doesn't have a lot of laughs or black humour. I was feeling quite bleak when I wrote it.



How are you feeling now?

Much better thanks! Scanners isn't quite as bleak. Scanners really harks back to Stereo, which was the first underground feature film I made. Patrick McGooan and Jennifer O'Neill are in it. "Scanners" are artificially created telepaths who have enormous powers of ESP but because they don't really know what they are they can't really cope with it. Another group realise what they are and try to use them for various evil purposes. *It sounds a similar premise to The Fury, which wasn't exactly a huge success, though personally I found it one of De Palma's best films.*

As with all of us, De Palma has his strengths and weaknesses and I thought in that film his weaknesses were very much to the fore. Structural weaknesses, questions that went unanswered. Though Scanners does deal with ESP, I don't think it has anything to do with The Fury whatsoever. I made Stereo in 1969 and really Scanners goes back to that film, exploring the ideas in a more narrative way, though it isn't a remake. When it came to doing similar scenes to those in The Fury, I found that I just had to ignore them and do what I felt my film needed. One of the problems anybody has in dealing with telepathy is how do you make it visual? By its nature it is a very internal thing — nose bleeds, things exploding, seizures, etc. There is a limit to how you can visualise what telepathy is, some of those things do overlap and I make no apologies. To me it is non-imitative, it's just there.

So Scanners is ready to go now?

Well, it's shot. I'm editing now and there are still opticals to be done and a lot of post production with sound and so on. Biggest budget film for me and the shortest pre-production time.

Why was that?

Basically because of the way films are financed in Canada. Investors who need a write off for that particular year require you to finish principal photography before the end of the year. As a result, Scanners was a very tough shoot.

You always work from your own scripts?

I did direct a drag-racing movie called Fast Company that was from someone else's script, though I did rewrite a lot of that. Claudia Jennings and John Saxon were the stars. I really like that film, it's a very straightforward action film. I really like cars and racing and machines and you don't see much of that in my horror films.

Though there may be nothing like that in your horror films, I still get the feeling from your films that you are very interested in technology.

That's true.

It strikes me that stylistically you let your camera stand back and let the action take place in front of it, rather than in the style of say, Tobe Hooper, who



Samantha Egger in *The Brood*.

throws his camera headlong into the action.

I think that the material determines that rather than any kind of stylistic thing you impose on the film. There are, for example, directors who are afraid to just let their actors do what they are supposed to do. If I'm on a close up of an actor's face and they're doing everything they're supposed to be doing, then I'm content to leave it rather than impose my own presence on the shot. I suppose that's because I write my own dialogue and therefore the scene is still *me*.

Getting back to working from other people's scripts, how do you feel about that?

Well, I find it very difficult to work with other people's scripts. Mostly because the majority of scripts you get, whether you're a producer or whatever, are atrociously bad. It's very hard to find a good script. I also think my writing is more important in terms of expressing myself than my directing. I think that if I were directing nothing but other people's scripts, I might become, say, William Friedkin, but I wouldn't become Fellini! I can't get excited about becoming a competent journeyman director who can take any script and get the best out of it. *Another director that I think you are comparable to, in terms of themes and budgets, is John Carpenter. However, where Carpenter's filmic references are only too visible in his pictures, I find it difficult to trace your roots. How did you*



Barbara Steele in *Shivers*.

become involved in the horror genre?

Well, it seemed very natural. When I was writing stories, even before I considered film, I usually ended up writing science fiction or horror. There's something about the imagery and fertility of invention in the genre and the closeness with dream imagery that appeals to me. Why that should be, I don't know. But I do feel more free, creatively, working within that field than I would doing, say, a realistic comedy. That's not to say I don't want to do other things. However, if I don't end up doing other things, by a natural process of events, then I won't be too upset.

I'm going to throw a couple of quotes back at you from a few years ago. You said that your films are "subversive of security" and that all horror films "should contain a point at which it (the



A scene from Cronenberg's unreleased movie, *Scanners*.

film) turns surreal". How do you feel about those statements now?

Certainly those two quotes connect. When the real becomes surreal, when a comfortable or familiar life goes from day into nightmare — that's what's interesting. I think you're born and you acquire a sense of reality that you don't question for quite a long time. When you're young you are trying to understand what is reality, trying to cope with it, live in it, manipulate it. Then it starts to be overturned. You then realise that there are many possible realities. I don't want to get mystical about it, I don't feel mystical about it, but young people sense that there are aspects of life that they haven't come to terms with yet, or had to confront. Things like ageing, sickness and death. People have an urge to confront things like that, even in a metaphorical way, and that's why I think horror films are particularly attractive to the young. *So you see horror films as a confrontation rather than an escape?*

Absolutely. That's why I laugh at people who think that science-fiction and especially horror films are escapists. I think it quite the opposite. Good ones, serious ones, are the absolute opposite to escape.

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BOOK WORLD

After many delays Big O have finally published *Giger's Alien*, an in-depth account of Giger's work on the Twentieth Century-Fox sf film of last year. We present reviews by two regular Starburst contributors Alex Carpenter and Phil Edwards.





GIGER'S ALIEN Review by Phil Edwards.

Despite what any critics of the film may have thought of the derivative storyline, the fact remains that *Alien* is the best sf "hardware" film yet made, thanks to designers like Ron Cobb, Moabius, Michael Seymour, etc. However, the film will be best remembered for the stunning alien elements designed by Swiss born artist, Hans Rudy Giger.

In a large format paperback, Giger describes the various sequences he contributed, the derelict ship and alien planetoid landscape, the face hugger and chest burster, the latter co-designed by Roger Dicken, and of course, the Alien itself, which was adapted from one of his *Necronomicon* paintings.

Through a fascinating selection of photographs, the majority of which are in colour, Giger shows the creative process from production sketches and paintings, through set and costume construction to the finished scene in the film.

The text is excerpted from Giger's diary and gives a rare insight into the physical production of a major sf film in a way that, to date, is unique. His descriptions of meetings with producers and other personnel connected with the film more than hints at the problems encountered and the frustrations of a creative artist involved for the first time in the world of the Hollywood super-production. As Giger himself says in the brief foreword, "I recognise now that Brandywine Productions, 20th Century-Fox and Dan O'Bannon made it possible for me to realize my dream - my fantasy world - in three dimensions". This statement goes some way to restoring the balance of the last chapter of the book, when Giger's single mindedness seems to take hold and his reporting of events becomes somewhat one-sided.

GIGER'S ALIEN Review by Alex Carpenter

Hans Rudy Giger's paintings have much the same mesmeric quality as a very bad car crash - no matter how your stomach feels, your eyes find a strange attraction in the mangled and bloodied bodies. Thus, with hindsight, it is easy to see why Giger was chosen to create the monstrosities for Twentieth Century-Fox's "haunted house in space" movie, *Alien*.

On a personal level I find no appeal in Giger's art or in his public image but I admire anyone who - in the deadline and budget-conscious film industry - can come up with unique concepts which leave the audience wondering about the background and "history" of the creations. The derelict spacecraft and the creatures themselves certainly left me wishing that Ridley Scott had delved further into their past rather than misspand screen time trying to impress with how good he could make a film look - superb production and design plus a stack of cinematic clichés do not an entertaining movie make.

The text is in the form of extracts from Giger's journal and takes us from his first involvement in the project (July 1977) through

to the 6th September 1978 - when *The Alien* finally makes its first appearance on the soundstage at Shepperton Studios - and beyond.

We see the trials and tribulations of a "true" artist trying to bring the gospel according to Giger to the Philistines of the film industry. We also "get inside Giger's head". Whatever his talents, Giger - through his own words - stands revealed as a supreme egotist. He is not, of course, unique in this but most will admit to their own mistakes. Giger apparently makes none! If you wish - if it makes you feel better - forgive him his presumption because he is a genius. But do, please, first ensure that he justifies the description.

The only other collection of his work I've seen is *Necronomicon*. It's a giant 16 1/2" x 11 1/2" book full of paintings accompanied by text from the man himself. Until recently out-of-print, it has just been republished by Big O, price £8.50. On the basis of this book alone I would prefer to describe him as "bizarre" rather than deify him with the title of "genius".

However, there is still Giger's *Alien*. Much of his work presented here still has a negative quality but I find it much more acceptable than that seen in *Necronomicon*. I suspect part of the "improvement" lies with the producers of the film who were, after all, interested in a much larger, more commercial market than Giger's work would normally attract.

In Giger's *Alien* we have an extraordinarily interesting look at the creation of movie effects. His design sketches and pre-production paintings would be of interest by themselves but we also get (almost) step-by-step photographs of the construction of each of his brainchildren. We see the early concepts for the chest-burster, the tremendous amount of work that went into bringing the *Alien* to life (including photographs of Boleji Badojo getting (built) into his part and much more).

Everything you wanted to know about the role Giger played in bringing *Alien* to the screen is here. There's even an interesting piece on the scene that didn't reach the screen. The cocoon sequence is much-talked about. Now you can see how Tom Skerritt and Harry Dean Stanton would have finished their days; this section, and every other, is illustrated (mainly in colour) not only by Giger's work but also by stills from the film so you can compare Giger's vision with Ridley Scott's ultimate version.

Hans Rudy Giger obviously worked hard to put his best into *Alien* and this book shows it. It's a publication of interest to those in whom *Alien* touched a nerve but will also be enjoyed by those intent on gaining knowledge of the workings of the production and design creators within the film industry.

Giger's *Alien* does have one major flaw. I've mentioned it throughout this piece, it doesn't make the book any less valuable but I wish that Giger's personality didn't come through so strongly. It made the book that much harder to read.

But after all, it is Giger's *Alien*...
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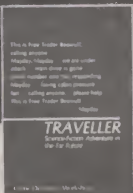
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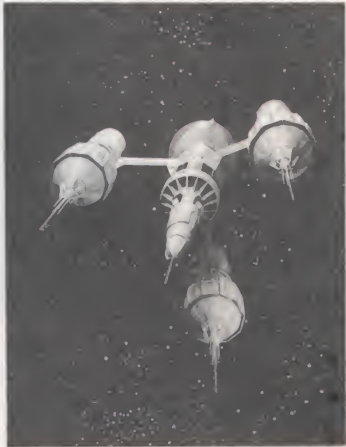
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THE ART OF DESIGN: IRVINE ON EFFECTS



Everyone knows what a rocket looks like. Streamlined, tapering to a point with four fins and is painted silver. Or rather, up until relatively recently, that is the sort of impression most had of a space rocket. These days ask any youngster to draw one and you will end up with a combination of X-Wings, Eagles and Enterprises with a touch of TARDIS thrown in for good measure.

As long as there has been science fiction films, there have been designers putting the producers, the script writers, and their own ideas into three-dimensional images. Their influences would have been the style of films at that particular time, current thinking in the scientific world and — in particular — a good deal of their own imagination.

Take, for example, just one aspect of sf design — the ways one can transport oneself from the surface of the Earth. If we ignore, for the moment, such devices as anti-gravity and teleportation, it all comes down to that vehicle mentioned at

the beginning — the rocket. The story of the actual rocket is by no means new. Solid fuel rockets were probably invented by the Chinese and through the centuries were adapted as toys, weapons of war and life-saving devices.

Solid fuel rockets are still with us and a November 5th skyrocket and the solid fuel rocket boosters of the Space Shuttle are really the same animal — though the latter has slightly more teeth in terms of technological sophistication and pure power. However, good solid fuel rockets were, and are, (and after all one of America's manned spacecraft was launched by solid fuel rockets — Gemini by a Gemini-Titan 2) they cannot match the exhaust velocity of a liquid fuelled rocket.

Liquid fuelled rockets are a much newer invention by about 1000 years. In fact, the early developments probably paralleled the early years of the film industry. The problem was that the first work was purely theoretical, and it was done in Russia in the first years of this

century by a half deaf school teacher, Konstantin Tsiolkovsky. The only people who took any notice were similarly-minded individuals in other countries, notably Germany, France and the USA. It took until 1926 for the world's first liquid fuelled rocket to take to the air, and this was in the United States. Designed, built and launched by Clark University professor, Robert H. Goddard (above left), not the epitome of the modern idea of a space rocket. It stood about 12 feet high, developed a thrust of about 15 lbs, and its first flight lasted 2½ seconds. It rose to a height of 41 feet went downrange 184 feet and landed in a cabbage patch. This was on the 16th March 1926 — an ignoble beginning, but it was a landmark event and similar developments in Germany would lead, a decade plus later, to the V-2.

All this apart, early film makers had a much better method of launching a craft — shooting it out of a gun!

George Melies, pioneer of space movies, adopted this method with his sf

spoof, *A Trip to the Moon*, in 1902. But the idea had been around for a long time in story form, with Jules Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon* perhaps being the most famous. However unscientifically sound, the idea continued for many years, even as far as *Things to Come*, which employed the Space Gun, shooting a projectile by a method guaranteed to reduce the occupants to a rather thin mess on the floor of the craft. Nevertheless, these novel approaches to space travel, along with as yet untried methods such as anti-gravity, continued to be the mainstay of films until well into the second half of the century.

After the Second World War when the first ballistic missile — the V-2 — had been seen, the people who had talked about and developed such devices, on both sides of the fence, were listened to with slightly more interest and respect. For here, in fact, was not a fictional craft but a real, working space rocket which, although it had been sidetracked onto a more sinister task, was quite capable of lifting a small payload into orbit with the minimum modification. In fact, after the war a number of captured V-2s were launched as research rockets and the Soviet Union still uses a sounding rocket which is a direct descendant of the wartime original.

The influence seems to have found its way into the films of that period. The most classic example is the *Lunar Eagle* from *Destination Moon*. A large V-2 if ever there was one. Adaptations obviously had to be made, landing legs were added and some method of getting the crew down to the surface of the Moon. This always seemed to be a long ladder which appeared a slightly ignominious way of travelling the last few feet of such a momentous journey, but then again it was good enough for Neil Armstrong.

The *Space Ark*, from *When Worlds Collide*, took on a similar shape, but with a difference. The whole craft was launched horizontally on a rocket sledge only being flung vertically into space for the last fraction of this journey. The horizontal launching technique is scientifically sound and was initiated in the 50s in a technical paper by Arthur C. Clarke. However, there were two major differences. Firstly, it was described as electromagnetic propulsion, *ie* a linear motor, and the system would only be viable in airless environment, such as the Moon. Indeed the plan is by no means dead and was recently revived by the father of the modern space colony, Professor Gerard K. O'Neill of Princeton University, as a method of transporting large quantities of lunar soil into orbit and thence to be used in the construction of permanent space bases.

Conquest of Space, in 1955, was unusual for that era, in that it did not limit itself to streamlined rockets. It was

based on the non-fictional book by Willy Ley and it featured the designs of astronaut Chesley Bonestell. For the first time in films we were taken into some of the intricacies that would concern future space-flights. The construction of orbiting space stations, the rendezvousing of supply ships and the docking and transferring of crew and cargo. All these techniques were new to the cinema audience and it would be a decade and a half before they were seen again.

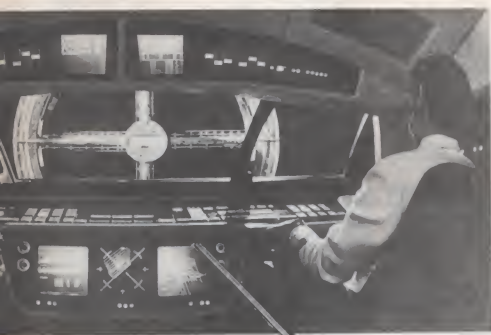
Moving away, for a moment, from the rocket to that other favourite of sf travel, the Flying Saucer, we find it made its appearance with a vengeance in the 1950s. Presumably it was the first sighting of a 'flying saucer' in 1947 by the pilot of a light aircraft, Kenneth Arnold in the Rocky Mountains area of Idaho, that initiated the 50s trend. Famous examples included *Forbidden Planet's* C-57D Cruiser, unusual in that it was terrestrially originated, Exeter's craft from *This Island Earth* and the graceful saucer from *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. These days the saucer trend seems to have died out. The whole concept is very 50s oriented anyway, but the 60s and 70s did produce some. *The Invaders*, *Lost in Space* and several Dr Who stories involved saucer shaped craft. UFO's visitors were rather dumpy versions and one could even term the Millennium Falcon a flying saucer.



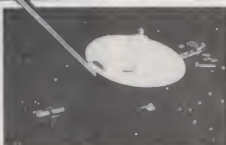
Left: A portrait of Russian Rocket pioneer Konstantin Tsiolkovsky with a model of one of his designs. Above: The Orion shuttle from 2001: A



The next, probably the most important stage occurred only just after the making of *Conquest of Space* (1955) and this was on the 4th October 1957 when the world had its first real spacecraft. It is doubtful if any sf designer was influenced by *Sputnik 1*, the first artificial satellite. A 25 inch diameter polished aluminium sphere with four whipl aerials is hardly the most awe-inspiring of designs, but with the launch of this object the designs of artists and modellers were to be influenced. And not only that, the whole concept of the sf film was about to change. With 2001: A Space Odyssey came a new generation of designs, techniques, processes and building materials, for reality had caught up with the fiction.



Space Odyssey approaches the orbiting space wheel. Right: The original Voyager space probe. Below: Thunderbird 2 on the launch pad from the Gerry Anderson series, Thunderbirds.



To a certain extent, some of this new type of detailing and design had been invented for the many Gerry Anderson puppet tv series, Thunderbirds in particular, and many of the special effects technicians and modellers moved on to 2001. In fact it has been suggested, almost seriously, that during the four years it took to make the film, everyone in the British effects industry worked on 2001 at some time or other!

What ever the influences — Anderson, 2001 or NASA — the whole approach to spacecraft design changed in the 60s. Designs were taking on a purpose, perhaps emphasised by the very special approach to the Apollo craft, which required three very different, but vitally necessary, modules to get it to, and return it from, the Moon. This attention to purpose started to become so important that films invariably employed a scientific advisor to keep them in touch with the latest developments.

Even the Thunderbirds craft were individually designed with a specific purpose in mind. Thunderbird 1 was the rocket powered aircraft, launched vertically, but with swing wings to allow it to land like an airplane — shades of the Shuttle. Thunderbird 2, the transporter. A slower, bulkier craft but capable of shifting a variety of loads in the various pods — pre-dating the modern wide-bodied freight aircraft, such as the Galaxy

and Hercules by a good few years. Thunderbird 3 was the true spacerocket, limited to orbital missions, Thunderbird 4 the little submarine similar in theory to the many miniature one and two man subs now in operation around the world. Finally Thunderbird 5, the orbiting space station.

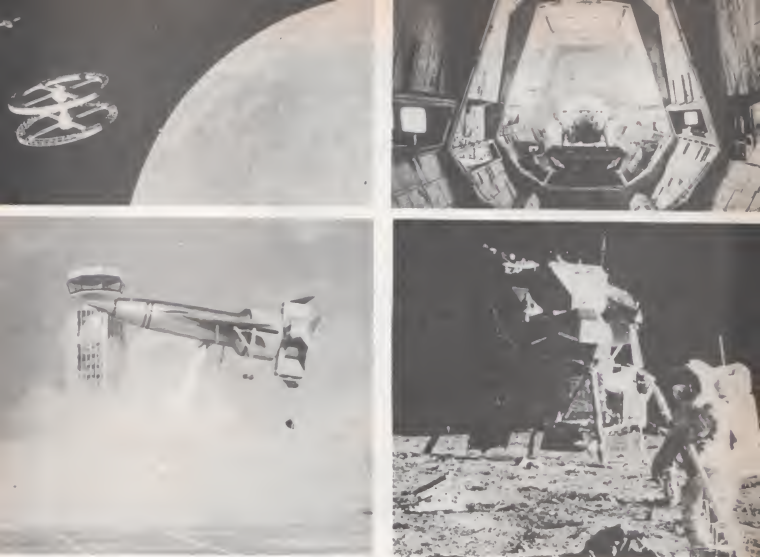
Later Anderson series would go to the Moon, and the Moon was always the logical first step for any expedition away from the Earth's influence for a manned or unmanned mission in reality. And in reality the Moon has had an odd selection of shapes thrown at her. Spheres with petals (Lunas 9 and 13); 8 wheeled bathtubs (Lunokhod); Spidery objects that would not stand up under their own weight on the Earth (the Apollo Lunar Module) and electric buggies whose drivers in their lighter moments attempted to take part in a lunar Grand Prix (the Lunar Roving Vehicle). In fiction the designs, if anything, haven't been quite as odd! One of my particular favourites, the 2001 Moonbus whispered across the lunar surface looking far more at home than a Lunar Module. The Lunar Buggy and Shuttle from Moon to base 3 borrowed heavily on projected NASA drawings and even the vehicle in Moon Zero 2 looked like a design Boeing had toyed with at some time or other. The UFO Interceptors retained a certain early Anderson look to them, but the 1999 Eagles exhibited a very practical approach to their design. Resembling a sort of lunar Skycrane helicopter, they even had attention lavished on a jettisonable cabin, 'the beak' as an escape pod.

Away from the Moon and into deep space many of the designs constraints disappeared, but if you stayed within the realms of known technology, one shape of craft became apparent. A good example is the 2001 Earth-orbit to Moon's surface shuttle, Aries, with its most logical form for a deep space craft — a sphere. It is the strongest shape to withstand pressure — and that is what it will have to do, withstand internal pressure — as there are no corners where weaknesses can develop. The world's first manned spacecraft — Vostok — was this shape for a similar reason. In 2001 this idea was followed through with the Jupiter ship, the Discovery. In addition not only was the forward crew section a sphere but so were the three one-man Pods. I suppose one could even liken this approach to the Death Star, but here I think that the shape was purely for aesthetic reasons rather than being scientifically sound.

If the sphere is one impression of a deep space craft, there is another aspect that also became apparent particularly with 2001, and this is that a craft which is not going to encounter any planetary atmosphere has no need of streamlining. Look at any real space-probe — Voyager for example — and compare it with its

2001 saw the beginning of most aspects of the film, or tv series, that we now take for granted and expect. It initiated the "bits and pieces" style of spacecraft which features rivets, panel lines and as much external piping as can be fitted. The film made as much as it could of the pure hardware of space travel. The problems of moving and eating in free-fall conditions, the time journeys would take and the manoeuvring that would be necessary between craft.

From the miniatures and design point of view 2001 particularly emphasised the fact that craft were becoming specialised and they had a purpose. This film featured five craft of varying design and we saw many more in background shots.



Top: The majestic orbiting space wheel from Stanley Kubrick's classic science fiction movie, 2001. A Space Odyssey. Above: Thunderbird 1 makes a vertical landing in the series Thunderbirds. The craft was a cross between a rocket and a plane with VTOL abilities.

launch vehicle. The Titan 3E-Centaur combination required a shroud over the folded Voyager to protect it during its passage through the Earth's atmosphere.

However once free of this constraint, the probe could emerge in all its glory — magnetometer booms, nuclear generators and aerials all of which would not have lasted 30 seconds during the initial stage of the journey.

In 2001 the Discovery was a pure deep space craft. She was presumably constructed in Earth or Moon orbit and would not intentionally ever go near an atmosphere. Instead the Orion would transport people and supplies from the surface of the Earth to orbit and as such had to possess a certain amount of streamlining. With her stubby wings and relatively wide body, the Orion is a good illustration of what an advanced Shuttle could very well look like in a few decades.

Silent Running featured the Valley Forge and her two sister ships, delving into the non-streamlined approach with

even more ferocity and looking more like space going oil refineries than interplanetary craft. Of course, the Nostromo was a space going oil refinery or rather a processing plant and here good use was made of tanks, derricks and general girder work to give it that well worn, used and even slightly tatty look.

The Cygnus also employed a great deal of girders and appendages, but here to make a change — and I think an effective change — they held together a large amount of glass and/or perspex, giving the craft an especially individual style.

Deep space craft do not of course have to be cluttered. The Liberator from Blake's 7 and Star Trek's USS Enterprise — both Mk 1 and Mk 2 versions — are classic examples of this blueprint. Here though, we are probing into, as yet, unexplored territory. Scientifically, interplanetary and even interstellar flight are perfectly feasible, given certain restrictions. Even Black Holes are scientifically sound, although ideas as to "what's on the other side" tend to differ!

But faster than light (FTL) is not at present scientifically viable. However, one important fact emerges here which may eventually be of some help. Einstein tends to be quoted incorrectly on the subject of FTL. What invariably is said is

Top: The Earth/Moon shuttle, The Arias, is lowered below the surface of the moon after landing in the film 2001: A Space Odyssey. Above: "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." Those immortal words were spoken by Neil Armstrong.

that he maintained "nothing can travel faster than the speed of light". He didn't actually say this. What the quote should be is "nothing, with mass, can travel at the speed of light". Two subtle differences. All it forbids is an object with a rest mass greater than zero, travelling at the speed of light — 186,000 miles per second. He said nothing about going faster, although some people could argue that to go faster one has to travel through that magical 186,000 mps. But there are more ways to the other side of the wall than just by bashing a hole through it. Perhaps this is where hyperspace, wormholes and alternative universes come in? All this is merely supposition and theory for the present and the acceptance of FTL and/or hyperspace in the sf context certainly helps when it comes to getting around the galaxy. I cannot imagine any Star Trek story holding together if every time Captain Kirk says "can't you get any more power out of the engines, Scotty?", Mr Scott replies "I'm doing the best I can Cap'n, we shouldn't



be more than 150 years!" If the Enterprise, and Liberator, are scientifically dubious by present standards, heaven knows where the TARDIS fits. If FTL is shakey the Laws of Physics do not (at present) allow for time travel and that is one aspect which may never be resolved, although I realise it is very dangerous to say anything is impossible!

Where does this leave us all design-

wise? Well virtually anywhere you like - demonstrated by the vast selection of movie and tv space craft - X-Wings and TIEs, Vipers and Cylons, Starfighters and Marauders, Millennium Falcon, TARDIS, Eagles and Hawks. The Death Star, Enterprise and Klingon, Discovery, Pods and Moonbus. The Aries and Orion, Valley Forge, Nostromo, Dark Star, Liberator and Pursuit Ships. Moonrakers,

Cygnus and Palomino. And that is just the better known examples. As long as there are sf ideas to put into some kind of visual image, there will be new designs. You only have to look at any of the many artists' impressions, both scientific and fantasy, to realise that these days spaceships/craft/probes/stations can potentially be any size and shape, and often are! ●



